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SOCIAL MOVEMENT MEETINGS AS ORGANIZED COLLECTIVE SPACES: A HYBRID OF NETWORK, INSTITUTION AND PARTIAL ORGANIZATION

Case Ethereum Helsinki Meetup

Master's Thesis
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Abstract of master's thesis

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to describe social movement meeting organization and to increase the understanding of organized spaces for collective action. This paper contributes to several research streams. Firstly, this study advances a novel research stream conceptualizing social movements as spaces, and particularly as open rather than isolated spaces. Secondly, it raises meetings into the focal point of organizing and offers a multisided examination of meeting organization instead of limiting structure under one label such as network or formal organization. Thirdly, by focusing on organizing based on multiple logics and partial organization this study brings forward the understanding of organizing in the contemporary society as well as organization located in the outskirts of formal organizations. Fourthly, by making a distinction between organizing and mobilizing, this study develops the understanding of how movements can serve as a resource for individual actors and their goals. Finally, the case provides a rare example of a movement born around a nascent digital innovation with possibly considerable impact on society.

The research was carried out as a descriptive case study focusing on the meetings of Helsinki Ethereum Meetup, which is a meeting-based organization set up around a nascent blockchain platform, Ethereum. The primary data consisted of eight interviews with the meetup participants. In addition, the case was complemented by an analysis of the group's social media accounts and membership data retrieved from meetup.com, through which the group was facilitated. The data was analyzed utilizing a dual approach deploying both open coding and theory-based coding techniques. Meetings and their organization were analyzed from three perspectives: a network, an institution and an organization. Furthermore, the case analysis included identifying the ideological, business and political context of the case and the meetup group's relations to other groups in the field of blockchain technologies.

The results of the analysis indicate that the meetings can be described as a hybrid of a norm-based institution, a network hub and a partial organization with less than all elements of a formal organization. In practice, all three perspectives are linked to each other and together complement each other to form one entity. However, this study implies that the specific logics can be regarded as analytically separate to arrive at a more pronounced multilevel analysis of meeting organizing.

In addition, the case organization was found to be an example of a pioneer group in its own field being the first and only meetup devoted to Ethereum in Finland at the time of the study. Furthermore, the settings and the organization of the meetup were possibly linked to the group's position in its field and the nascent developmental state of Ethereum.

Keywords social movements, organizing, meetings, collective spaces, pluralism, blockchain

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Tiivistelmä

Tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteena oli kuvata tapaamisia yhteiskunnallisen toiminnan kontekstissa ja ymmärtää miten tapaamiset on organisoitu sekä miten ne voivat toimia tiloina kollektiiviselle toiminnalle. Tämä tutkimus edistää useita tutkimussuuntauksia. Ensiksi, tämä tutkimus edistää tuoretta tutkimussuuntausta, joka tarkastelee yhteiskunnallisia liikkeitä tiloina. Toiseksi tämä tutkimus nostaa tapaamiset huomion keskipisteeseen ja tarjoaa monitahoisen analyysin tapaamisten järjestämisestä rajoittamatta analyysia yhden konseptin, kuten verkosto, alle. Kolmanneksi, keskittymällä useisiin logiikoihin perustuvaan organisointiin sekä osittaisiin organisaatioihin, tämä tutkimus edistää ymmärrystä siitä miten organisointi tapahtuu virallisten organisaatioiden ulkopuolella ja välimaastossa. Neljänneksi, erottamalla järjestäytymisen ja mobilisoinnin toisistaan tämä tutkimus vie eteenpäin ymmärrystä siitä miten liikkeet voivat toimia resursseina yksilöille ja heidän tavoitteilleen, eikä toisin päin. Viidenneksi, tämä tutkimus tarjoaa harvinaisen esimerkin liikkeestä, joka on syntynyt orastavan digitaalisen innovaation ympärille.

Tutkimus toteutettiin case-tutkimuksena, jonka kohteena oli Helsinki Ethereum Meetup. Helsinki Ethereum Meetup on lohkoketjualusta Ehtereumin ympärille perustettu ryhmä, jonka päätarkoituksena on järjestää tapaamisia eli meetupeja. Ensisijainen aineisto koostui meetup-osallistujien haastatteluista, joita täydensivät ryhmän some-kanavien analyysi sekä jäsenistön kokoa ja kehitystä koskevat tilastot. Aineiston analyysi oli kaksivaiheinen hyödyntäen sekä aineistopohjaista open coding tekniikkaa että teoriakehikkoon pohjautuvaa koodausta. Seuraten Haugin (2013) teoriaa tapaamisista järjestettynä tilana, aineisto analysoitiin niin ihmissuhteisiin perustuvan verkoston, päätöksiin pohjautuvan organisaation kuin normeihin luottavan instituution kannalta. Tämän lisäksi myös tutkimuskohteen laajempi konteksti otettiin huomioon analysoimalla ryhmän ideologinen, kaupallinen ja poliittinen konteksti. Tutkitun ryhmän positio suhteessa muihin lohkoketjuaiheisiin ryhmiin otettiin myös huomioon kokonaiskuvan ymmärtämiseksi.

Analyysin tulokset viittaavat siihen, että case organisaation tapaamiset ovat yhdistelmä instituutioille, verkostoille ja organisaatioille tyypillisiä piirteitä. Nämä kolme ohjaavaa logiikkaa täydentävät toisiaan muodostaen yhdessä tapaamisten rakenteen. Toisaalta tämä tutkimus osoittaa että näitä kolmea logiikkaa voidaan tarkastella erillisinä konsepteina, ja täten syventää ja tarkentaa ymmärrystä tapaamisten rakenteesta sekä organisoinnista.

Tutkimuksessa selvisi myös, että tutkittu meetup ryhmä oli esimerkki edelläkävijäryhmästä alallaan ollen ainoa Ethereumiin keskittyvä ryhmä Suomessa. Ryhmän ainutlaatuisen aseman sekä aiheena olevan teknologian kypsymättömyys vaikuttivat mahdollisesti tapaamisten rakenteeseen sekä siihen miten ne oli organisoitu.

Avainsanat sosiaaliset liikkeet, organisointi, tapaamiset, yhteisötilat, pluralismi, lohkoketjut

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research topic and background

Social movements have affected the society (Briscoe & Gupta, 2016), organizations (e.g., Soule 2012A; Soule 2012B; Strang & Soule, 1998, Weber & King, 2005), and markets (Davis, Morrill, Rao, & Soule, 2008; King & Pearce, 2010; King & Soule, 2007; Scheineberg, 2013). Moreover, with the increasingly global economy and high-speed communication technologies (Garrett, 2006; Liu, 2017; Salter, 2003), social movements have become transnational affecting markets and industries worldwide (Davis et al., 2008; Langman, 2013) such as the Occupy Movement that caused worldwide protests against economic and political inequality in 2011 (Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012). With the power to affect multiple actors from formal organizations to legislators, movements and their organization have become a key interest for organizational research and spurred into a vibrant research stream on its own.

The abovementioned Occupy movement is not only an example of a widespread series of protests and civil action but also an example of some novel perspectives in social movement theory (Haug, 2013; Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012, Langman, 2013). To begin with, the movement questioned the relationship between state and movements as it refused to make specific demands to the state (Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012), which has been regarded one of the key tactics of social movements for bringing change (e.g., Briscoe & Gupta, 2016; Giugni, 1998). Instead, the movement took another approach to influence. The movement utilized space in their protest in two interesting ways. Firstly, the protesters used spatial disruption strategies by setting up their camps and marches in places they were not allowed, such as the Zucotti park in New York (Langman, 2013; Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012). Secondly, the activists used space for prefigurative politics (Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012); living and organizing an alternative reality they wished to see (Langman, 2013).

Indeed, the very reason to organize can be to try to establish an order that differs from the one that would exist otherwise (Ahrne & Brusson, 2011; Haug, 2013). Moreover, the organization of a space can be regarded as a goal in itself (Haug, 2013), in contrast to seeking change by protesting or making demands at the state. Yet, previous research on social movements has tended to regard organization either synonymous or subordinate to mobilization (Haug, 2013). A wealth of studies exists on a resource mobilization perspective that focuses on different mechanisms for mobilizing actors to take specific action or adopt an idea (e.g., Benford & Snow, 2000; Jasper, 2011; Jenkins, 1983; McAdam & Paulsen, 1993; McCarthy & Zald, 1977; Weber et al. 2008). From this perspective, organization is instrumental as it ultimately serves to mobilize supporters (Haug, 2013). However, focusing only on mobilization has led to disregarding the type of organizing that lacks a shared aim or goal that mobilization would aim for. Rather than seeing movements as the builders of resources, individual actors can be seen as active influencers seeking to actualize their own visions. Haug (2013, p. 706) offers an illustrative description of this perspective:

> Rather than studying the 'front stage' of protest where social movements appear to the general public as more or less homogenous actors with a given goal and strategy, these studies attend to social movements as action contexts or collective spaces in which activists find themselves and which they aim to shape and organize according to their needs and visions.

Hence, from this perspective, organizing becomes the central activity.

Taking organizing into the focus not only challenges the concept of a movement but also raises the question of how collective spaces are organized. Since the 1990's, organizations and movements have become similar in the routines and strategies they adopt (Davis et al., 2008) and both organization and social movement theorists have borrowed concepts from each other (Soule, 2012B; Weber & King, 2005). Thus, it is hardly surprising that both organizations and movements have lately been examined largely from the perspective of a network (e.g., Ghoshal & Barlett, 1990; Krinsky & Crossley, 2014; Podolny & Page, 1998, Moliterno & Mahony, 2010; Schoemaker & Jonker, 2005) or an institution (e.g., Briscoe & Safford, 2008; Barley & Torbelt, 1997; Lawrence, Hardy, Phillips, 2002; Zucker, 1987). However, rather than arguing between the concepts of an organization, network and institution, Haug (2013) presents a novel conceptualization of movement as a hybrid of all the three perspectives. Studying movements as a result of three social orders enables investigating both the emergent and decided side of organizing space. Whereas network is based on relationships and trust, and institution on norms, organization can be seen as based on decisions concerning key organizational elements. Ahrne and Brunsson (2011) define the five key organizational elements as membership, hierarchy, monitoring, sanctions and rules. This perspective both introduces a decision-based view of organization to the study social movement as a space as well as helps to understand the complex reality of organizing.

Separating the concepts of network, institution and organization also serves to locate a space. Ahrne & Brunsson (2011) make a distinction between formal and partial organizations, defining the latter having less than all five organizational elements. Social movements tend to have less than all elements of a full organization either because they are not considered necessary (e.g., sanctions or incentives are not needed to establish collective action) or because the very reason for organizing is establishing an alternative (e.g., organizing according to egalitarian ideal without hierarchy) (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011). Such partially organized spaces can be located in and around organizations, but especially in-between organizations. As they exist in the outer lines of complete organizations, these spaces work as an inter-organizational meeting place of actors from multiple fields (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011; Furnari, 2014). These in-between spaces can also be seen as inter-organizational sites providing both a structure for groups to coordinate themselves as well as integrating the needs and visions of the groups (Gerhards & Rucht, 1992). Such spaces offer a fruitful setting for new practice generation (Furnari, 2014) and diffusion of ideas, strategies and practices (Törnberg & Törnberg, 2017), and thus deserve a closer scrutinization

Meetings can serve as above-mentioned collective spaces for inter-field and inter-organizational interaction (Haug, 2013). Moreover, meetings are a standard activity of organizing (Scott et al., 2012; Rogelberg et al., 2007) and actors spend a significant amount of time in meetings at workplaces and movements (Haug; 2013, Scott et al., 2012). Yet, meetings have received relatively little attention in the management and social movement literature (Haug, 2013; Jarzabkowski & Seidl, 2008; Scott et al., 2012). Movements have been studied on a global movement level (Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012), national level (Weber et al., 2009), community level (Nicholls, 2008; Stahler-Sholk, Vanden, & Kuecker, 2007), project level (O'Mahony & Bechky, 2008), and individual level (King & Soule, 2007) but meetings have not acquired much attention as a central level despite of being sites where much of face-to-face communication takes place and trust between participants is established (Haug, 2013).

From an analytical point of view, meetings represent an example of a dual structure (Gerhards & Rucht, 1992). On one hand a meeting includes a 'meeting event', the actual interaction of the participants. On the other hand, a meeting is also a setting in which the meeting activity takes place. In addition, the setting of a meeting both structures the interactions of participants as well as is the result of the interaction (Haug, 2013). These features of meetings make them a useful analytic lens for understanding organizing as a result of both conscious efforts and interaction.

Much of earlier research on social movements and space has focused on 'free spaces' and 'safe havens' providing actors the opportunity to gather capacities while isolated from the dominant or opposed group, taking an 'isolation' view of spaces (Futrell & Simi, 2004; Polletta, 1999; Tétreault, 1993; Törnberg & Törnberg, 2017). However, Kellog (2009) found that institutional change was achieved by doing the opposite and involving actors from the opposing and dominant side to the site. Furthermore, Furnari's (2014) theory of practice generation in part-time small-scale settings implied that involving actors from a variety of fields provides a fruitful setting for collective experimentation. Thus, turning the perspective from isolation to inclusion could help better understand how institutional change takes place and how different interests can be balanced within the settings. This also allows examining movements as spaces for a variety of interests and goals; overcoming a problematic assumption that movement as a whole can, or wants to, formulate specific aims and measures for success (Giugni, 1999).

The example of the Occupy movement and discussion around it (e.g., Gleason, 2013; Swan & Husted, 2017; Tremayne, 2014) illustrate another gap in the current research on social movement organization. Much of the recent studies have focused on the role of information technologies and how technology affects communication and organization of social movements (e.g., Bennett, 2012, Garrett, 2006; Hensby, 2017; Liu, 2017) but less attention has been given to movements born around an information technology or a digital innovation. Studies about information technology movements have largely been limited to two groups: hackers (e.g., Coleman, 2013; Lu et al., 2010; Uitermark, 2017) and open source communities (e.g., Hertel, Niedner, & Herrman, 2003; von Krogh, Spaeth, & Lakhani, 2003; O'Mahony & Bechky, 2008) leaving a gap to the existing knowledge.

What makes this gap a key concern is that in today's information society digital technologies have the power to shape societal structures, politics, jobs and the way business is done (Webster, 1994). For example, the Internet has fundamentally altered the way we communicate, introduced new forms of cooperation, provided a platform for new types of businesses and changed the business and revenue models of multiple industries from music to banking (Jayawardhena & Foley, 2000; Tappscott, Lowy & Ticoll, 2000; Scholz, 2013).

During the past few years, a particularly interesting technology has emerged. The so-called blockchain – a distributed ledger technology – has been predicted to enable a revolution similar to the Internet in its effectiveness and transformative power (Tappscott & Tappscott, 2016).

The inception of blockchain technology can be traced to year 2008 when an unidentified person or a group published a white paper under the name Satoshi Nakamoto explaining a solution for peer-to-peer digital cash that allows users to make secure verified transactions without a third party (Nakamoto, 2008), which lead to the development of bitcoin and other peer-to-peer cryptocurrencies (Wallace, 2011). Ever since its publication, bitcoin and the underlying technology have evoked discussion about the possible applications of the technology and their implications to different industries and to the society (see e.g., Iansiti & Lakhani, 2017; Michelman, 2017; Swan, 2015).

The transformative feature of blockchain is that it enables parties to process transactions without any intermediaries such as a central bank using complex algorithms and consensus to verify transactions. This increases the security and transparency of the transaction while decreasing transaction time and cost (Swan, 2016). Consequently, the technology is predicted to have a variety of use cases from identity management to financial services, voting, crowd funding and supply chain management (see e.g., Catalini, 2017; Patel, 2017; Popper & Lohr, 2017).

In 2013 the development of blockhain technology took a leap as Vitalik Buterin laid out the foundation for Ethereum (Hajdarbegovic, 2014), an open software platform based on a public blockchain ledger (Vigna, 2016B). Compared to bitcoin, Ethereum's purpose and operational capabilities extend further as it allows running a wide variety of transactions and applications in its network whereas bitcon is a mere currency (Rosic, 2016). Hence the predicted use cases are remarkably more versatile, and Ethereum has been predicted to override bitcoin as the leading blockchain technology (Vigna, 2016A).

However, blockchain technologies are interesting not only due to the possible technical and business applications they might enable. Namely, the development of blockchain technologies has also had a strong ideological undertone. Blockchain has been linked to Socialist and Libertanian ideals as the technical infrastructure would, in theory, allow eliminating the interference of state, which responds to many forms of Anarchist thinking (Huckle & White, 2016). Some have gone as far to describe the bitcoin enthusiasts being comparable to a religious movement (Wallace, 2011). More conservatively, blockchain has been seen as a way for a more democratic organizing (Swan,2015). Thus, Ethereum as a blockchain technology provides an especially interesting and topical context for studying ideologically motivated movements born around a digital innovation.

From its first appearance, the development of blockchain and its applications has been fuelled by active individuals engaging through online forums, blogs and discussion groups (see e.g., Reddit, GitHub and BlockchainForum). Recently, the discussions have also taken the form of physical groups. One of these groups born around the shared interest in blockchain technology is Ethereum Helsinki Meetup, which serves as the subject of this case study.

Ethereum Helsinki Meetup organizes monthly meetings, so-called ‘meetups’, which are the center of its operation and main purpose for the existence of the group. The meetups gather together individuals from various backgrounds such as government officials, start-up entrepreneurs or coders to discuss the development of Ethereum and present their own projects built around the technology. Outside their meetings, the Ethereum Helsinki Meetup is facilitated through Meetup.com online platform (www.meetup.com) where information about meetings is announced. In addition, the online group is visible to all Internet users, and participation in the meetings is open, free and voluntary.

This group and their meetings offer a fruitful opportunity to explore movement meeting organizing in the context of a nascent digital innovation. Moreover, the openness of participation and diversity of participants make it an interesting case from the perspective of social movement spaces as contexts for inclusion and diversity.

1.2 Research objectives and questions

The objective of this research is to shed light on the organizing and settings of movement meetings as spaces for actors to come together and actualize their goals, in other words, the organization of meetings as collective spaces. This leads to the following two research questions:

> What characteristics do movement meeting spaces have (1), and how are these meetings spaces organized (2)?

The study seeks to answer these questions through a descriptive case study of a meeting-based group Ethereum Helsinki Meetup. The case consists of the group's meeting settings, which are analyzed through a triangular model combining network, institution and organizational elements. As such, the study serves as an empirical validation of the triangular organization–network–institution framework presented by Haug (2013).

This paper contributes to several novel or understudied research streams. Firstly, this study brings forward a modern research stream conceptualizing social movements as spaces, and particularly as open rather than isolated spaces. Secondly, it raises meetings into the focal point of organizing and offers a multisided examination of meeting organization instead of limiting structure under one label such as network or formal organization. Thirdly, by focusing on organizing based on multiple logics and partial organization this study brings forward the understanding of organizing in the contemporary society as well as organization located in the outskirts of formal organizations. Fourthly, by making a distinction between organizing and mobilizing, this study develops the understanding of how movements can serve as a resource for individual actors and their goals rather than the other way around. Finally, the case provides a rather rare example of a movement born around a nascent digital innovation with possibly considerable impact on society.

1.3 Definition of key terms

In this section key terms are defined in order to avoid confusion between concepts.

Throughout the study, terms *meetup* and *meeting* are used synonymously unless indicated otherwise. Whether meetups and meetings should be treated separately is a question worth of a study on its own. In this study, however, they are treated as, if not the same, at least similar enough to be used as synonyms.

The concept of *group* is used to refer to the meetup participants as one unit of a larger number of people. However, the concept does not here imply any unity among this set of people, such as collective identity, or any other characteristics that a 'group' from the perspective of organizational literature might have.

The term *perspective* is used to describe a specific approach into a defined phenomenon. It entails assumptions and valuations of the nature of the phenomenon. Term *logic* is used synonymously with the term ‘perspective’. Organizational *form* or *form of organizing* relate closely to the first two terms but emphasizes the structure as implied by a certain logic.

The rest of the central terms are defined when they appear in the text.

After this introduction, the structure of this thesis is as follows. After presenting the background and focus of this study in this chapter follows a review of existing research focusing on organizing, social movement spaces and meetings in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 describes the research process in detail and discusses the trustworthiness as well as ethical aspects of this study. Chapter 4 presents the empirical findings based on case data and discusses them in the light of existing research. Chapter 5 offers a summary of this study, discusses the implications and limitations of the main findings as well as suggests possible directions for future research.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a review of existing literature focusing on organizing, social movement spaces and meetings. After shortly presenting the converging of social movements and organization research, subsections 2.1.1–2.1.3 present three perspectives into organizing: network, institution and (partial) organization. After that follows a review of the concept of space in social movements as well as meetings as space and key unit in organizing. This chapter concludes with a development of a framework and definition that guided the data analysis that follows in chapter 4.

2.1 Social movements and organizations

Organization and social movement studies share a history rooted in understanding collective action (Weber & King, 2005) as well as politics and conflict (Zald, 2008). However, social movements and formal organizations were long seen as inherently different. Social movements were regarded as "spontaneous combustion— chaotic, unplanned, and non-routinized behavior emerging around some kind of perceived injustice" (Zald, 2008, p. 569) and formal organizations, in contrast, were regarded as rational, planned and based on control and authority (Zald, 2008). Consequently, social movements were not originally regarded as proper organizations as such.

However, since the 1970s when McCarthy and Zald (1977) published their seminal paper on resource mobilization in movements bridging the two fields together, the research streams have started to converge borrowing concepts from each other (Soule, 2012B, Weber & King, 2005; Weber et al., 2008; Zald, 2008). Especially during the last two decades organizations and movements have been seen to become similar in the routines and strategies they adopt (Davis et al., 2008). Indicative of this change of paradigm is that several scholars have begun to refer to social movements as social movement organizations (SMO) (e.g., Soule, 2012B; Davis et al., 2005).

Against this background, it is hardly surprising that the studies of organizing organizations as well as those about organizing movements have recently deployed similar approaches. Collective action in both social movements and organizations has increasingly been regarded from the perspective of a network and social ties (Baker, Nohria, & Eccles, 1992; Borgatti & Foster, 2003; Diani, 1992; Ghoshal & Barlett, 1990; Krinsky & Crossley, 2014; Podolny & Page, 1998, Moliterno & Mahony, 2010; Schoemaker & Jonker, 2005) as well as institutional logic (Besharow & Smith, 2014; Briscoe & Safford, 2008; Barley & Torbelt, 1997; Lawrence et al, 2002; Zucker, 1987). The definition of an organization has also recently been called into investigation and contestation (Ahrne et al., 2016; Brès, Raffler, & Boghossian, 2017; Meyer & Höllerer, 2014) to separate the discussions around networks, institutions and organizations as well as to understand organizing outside formal organizations (Ahrne & Brunssons, 2011).

The next three subsections discuss three central perspectives to organizing collective action: network, institution and organization. While it is possible that an organization is a combination of all three forms (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Haug, 2013), they are analytically distinct and emphasize different aspects of organizing.

2.1.1 Organizing as network

Organization researchers' interest into social networks has increased exponentially since the mid-1970s (Borgatti & Foster, 2003). The surge in studies adopting a network perspective can partly be seen as a larger paradigm shift from individualist and rational explanations towards more contingent and systemic approach (Borgatti & Foster, 2003). Organizing in a network form can also be seen as the logical result of the development of the modern society and communications technologies that have allowed new forms of cooperation and managing communication (Black & Edwards, 2000).

The definition of a network is based on social ties between actors (people, teams or organizations) (Borgatti & Foster, 2003; Krinsky & Crossley, 2014). Networks can be described as informal, non-hierarchical, unplanned and emergent structures of relationships that link social actors embedded in the network (Ahrne, Brunsson, & Seidl, 2016; Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011; Brass, Greve, & Tsai, 2014). Networks do not have clear boundaries (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011; Haug, 2013), and their size can be defined as "any collection of actors ($N \geq 2$)" (Podolny & Page, 1998, p. 59).

The type of ties between actors determines the type of the network (Borgatti & Foster, 2003). For example, friendship networks are based on friendship, as all participants of the network can be seen as friends or friends of a mutual friend (Haug, 2013). As networks are based on inter-actor relationships, they are maintained through reciprocity, trust and social capital (Borgatti & Foster, 2003; Podolny & Page, 1998), of which Podolny and Page (1998) argue trust is the most defining factor of network form of organization.

The benefits of network form of organization include enhancing learning, conveying rich information and resource management (Podolny & Page, 1998). As an analytic tool, network approach helps discovering dynamics and relations underlying official structures and representations (Krinsky & Crossley, 2014).

However, governing based only on network logic is rarely seen (Haug, 2013; Podolny & Page, 1998). Pure networks do not have hierarchies (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011) and lack legitimate organizational authority (Podolny & Page, 1998), which makes dispute solving and decision making difficult in a network (Haug, 2013; Podolny & Page, 1998). For a network to emerge into a collective actor, some other form of logic is needed.

To conclude, the focus of network approach to organizing is on the ties between actors that are maintained through personal trust and reciprocity.

2.1.2 Organizing as institution

Several disciplines from economics to philosophy have recently deployed the term 'institution', which as a social science concept dates back to the 18th century (Hodgson, 2006). Research on institutions is extremely versatile and to this day, no unanimous definition of what is an institution exists (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011; Hodgson, 2006). However, institutions, like networks, have been used to conceptualize collective actors or forces that are not markets, hierarchies nor companies (Podolny & Page, 1998).

The institutional perspective focuses on tradition and the wider context in which institutions exist. Institutions are shaped by institutional logics, which can be defined as socially constructed, higher order logics that include “assumptions, values, beliefs and rules by which individuals produce and reproduce their material subsistence, organize time and space” (Thornton & Occasio, 1999, p. 804). Institutional logics are historically constructed and are affected by existing wider societal and economic structures (Fligstein, 1985; Fligstein & Brantley, 1992; Thornton & Occasio, 1999). They persist over time and are resistant to change (Zucker, 1987).

Institutional logics can be material or symbolical: “They provide the formal and informal rules of action, interaction, and interpretation” (Thornton & Occasio, 1999, p. 804). They define the ‘rules of the game’ such as the meaning, sources and consequences of power in organizations and guide the attention of executives (Occasio, 1997; Thornton & Occasio, 1999). Consequently, the mechanism of institutional logic originates in the level of mental structure that guides cognition and actions (DiMaggio, 1997).

Elements of organization such as tasks, roles and routines are said to become institutionalized when they become taken-for-granted (Zucker, 1987). Then, it can be said that a latent agreement exists between the actors in the organization (Haug, 2013). That latent agreement is based on common norms, beliefs and values, and reproduced in routines, which also can become taken-for-granted (Haug, 2013; Zucker, 1987). Thus, from the perspective of institution, organizing is emergent, based on the creation of a collective sense of unity and taken-for-granted agreement rather than decisions (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011; Haug, 2013).

However, it is important to note that while institutional logics shape the cognition of actors in organization (DiMaggio, 1997) and hence produce a certain type of organizing affecting for example the choice of organizational form (Havemen & Rao, 1997), institutional logics do not originate from but rather exist in organizations (Thornton &

Occasio, 1999). Thus, where the network approach focuses on individual actors and the ties between them, the institutional logic focuses on higher levels such as occupational fields (Thornton & Occasio, 1999) or communities of practice where practices, norms values and ideas are generated and transmitted (Furnari, 2014; Strang & Soule, 1998).

As a summary, the focus of institutional view of organizing is on common norms, beliefs and rules that are taken for granted. The behaviour of actors is guided by mental structures adopted from and transmitted in the wider environment.

2.1.3 Organizing organizations

The last two sections have discussed and presented two distinctive forms and perspectives into organizing: network and institution. However, if organizations can be called "network organizations" (Baker et al., 1992) and organizations can become institutionalized (Zucker, 1987), how should 'organization' as a term be defined?

The concept of 'organization' (as a noun) is not as self-evident as it might appear as used in the spoken language. Furthermore, researchers have given various meanings and definitions for the term. The resulting conceptual and linguistic jungle has led some researchers to call for a more distinctive definition of an organization to retain the specificity of organization as its own phenomenon (Ahrne et al., 2016; Apelt et al., 2017, Barley, 2016).

The roots of the concept of an organization and organization research are in 'bureaucratic organizations' and Tayloristic scientific management focused on efficiency and rationalism (Brès et al., 2017). During the 70s, the attention of organizational researchers was placed to the fit between the environment and the structure of the company (Brès et al., 2017; Child, 1997). Simultaneously, social movement researchers started looking at movements as existing in organizations and having some degree of organization in contrast to viewing movements as spontaneous acts (McCarthy & Zald, 1977; Zald, 2008; Zald & Berger 1987). The view of organizations and movements developed to include aspects of culture such as identity

(Weber & King, 2005) paving way for a more fluid view of organization. Brès et al. (2017) describe this as a change from a 'unitary' model of organization (Hardy, 1991) into a more pluralistic view of organization.

In the search of a definition for organization, research has utilized a sort of a reduction method seeking to discover the core elements of an organization and to make distinctions between specific forms of organization (Rao, Morrill, & Zald, 2000; Romanelli, 1991). Common to these definitions is the focus on goals, (social) structure and technology (Romanelli, 1991). Rao et al. (2000) follow the taxonomy proposed by Scott (1995) extending the definition of the core elements of an organization to goals, authority relations, technologies, and marketing strategy. According to Rao et al. (2000), changes in one or more of these core elements depict a change in organizational form or a completely new form. Thus, these aspects are viewed as the central building blocks of an organization. However, this definition focuses on the outside view of an organization by focusing on the external stakeholders such as authorities and customers receiving marketing. It does not pay much attention to those who actually form the organization and how the organization is organized.

Ahrne and Brunsson (2011) present an alternative view of the core elements of organization moving the focus towards the actors inside of organizations and the form of organizing. Ahrne and Brunsson (2011) argue that organizing can be understood through five organizational elements: membership, hierarchy, rules, monitoring, and sanctions. Membership refers to the line between non-members and members of the organization, which can include for example the terms of employment and recruiting practices. Hierarch*y* is ultimately the decision of who has the authority to make decisions in the organization or what procedure is used for decision-making (such as voting practices). Hierarchy describes how formal power in the organization is distributed. Rules depict what members should and should not do, and thus regulate the activities in the organization. In contrast to norms, rules are always explicitly pronounced. Monitoring, on the other hand, can target the members of the organization through for example performance reviews and accounting systems, or it can target other actors through for example quality accreditations and checks. Sanctions, or incentives, refer to the awards or punishments the organization and its members can actualize. This can, for example, mean promoting or suspending a member of the organization, or granting a reward to another organization such as the Great Place to Work label.

What is common for the Scott's (1995) model and that of Ahrne and Brunsson (2011) is that they both note how authority is organized, and thus how the power to make decisions is distributed (or centralized). Moreover, Ahrne & Brunsson (2011) argue that the ability and power to make decisions about the organizational elements is the fundamental aspect of organization: "Organizational decisions are statements representing conscious choices about the way people should act or the distinction and classifications they should make" *(*Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011, p. 85). Hence, organizing is an intentional act whereas an institution or a network can emerge without a conscious decision. Ahrne and Brusson's (2011) theory presents organization as a decided order based on decisions, in the same way as a network is based on trust between actors and an institution is based on shared norms, beliefs and values.

Table 1 summarizes the three logics of organizing based on the literature reviewed in the previous sections. For the sake of clarity, the table highlights the differences rather than the similarities of these three perspectives into organizing. The table compares each perspective based on the focus of the literature and the fundamental foundation of that form of organizing.

The three perspectives can also be positioned in the micro–macro scale. The network approach can be seen as the most micro level as it focuses on the ties between actors, although the network itself can be considerably wide with no clear boundaries. The organization perspective here focuses on the level of a single organization, and the institution perspective reaches to a more macro view by focusing on how prevailing external logics coming from the environment affect the organization and actors in it.

Table 1. Three logics of organizing.

Organizing logic	Focus	Foundation
Network	Social ties between actors	Trust between actors of the network
Organization	Organizational elements: membership, hierarchy, rules, sanctions, monitoring	Decisions about organizational elements
Institution	Existing logics in the wider environment (e.g., field, society)	Common norms, values and beliefs

It should be noted that all these three represent an ideal-typical description, and the table deliberately emphasizes the most prominent aspects of each perspective. In reality, aspects of all these three logics can exist in one organization. Thus, these three logics should be regarded as lenses describing different sides of one phenomenon, complementing rather than excluding each other.

The reason why the model of Ahrne and Brunsson (2011) is so analytically useful is that it focuses on the degree of organization. Namely, the authors take their theory further by arguing that formal organizations, that research typically focus on, have all five organizational elements but that the organized spaces in-between and outside organizations can be described through the concept of partial organization. Partial organizations are, by definition, based on less than all of the five organizational elements (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011). Utilizing this framework allows including a variety of organizational forms into the analysis of organization expanding the understanding of how collective action is organized. By utilizing the perspective of partial organization, it is possible to examine organizations as sites for a plurality of organizing logics.

Indeed, researchers have lately called for a more pluralistic view of organizations in contrast to the 'unitary' rational-bureaucratic view of organization (Besharow & Smith, 2014; Brés et al. 2017; Hardy, 1991; Jarzabkowski & Fenton, 2006). Modern organizations can be seen as a hybrid of several organizing logics (Besharow & Smith, 2014; Battilana & Dorado, 2010) and the dominant logic(s) can change over time (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999). On the one hand, multiple logics can be seen as a source of contestation and conflict (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Greenwood, Magán Díaz, Xiao Li, & Céspedes Lorente, 2011; Zilber, 2002) threatening the performance and even existence of the organization (Tracey, Phillips, & Jarvis, 2011). On the other hand, other researchers have found that plurality of logics can increase the innovativeness of an organization (Jay, 2012). Moreover, a pluralistic organization can serve as a space for highly diverse actors (Brés et al. 2017; Helms, Oliver, & Webb, 2012) whose goals may conflict but collaboration and consensus is nevertheless possible (Hardy, 1991). In addition, the existence of multiple logics may alleviate transition of logics in times of field level change (Haverman & Rao, 1997).

Pluralistic organizations can also be regarded as an unconventional form of organization (Brés et al. 2017) compared to conventional formal organizations (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011). The choice of organizational form and organizing can in fact be regarded as a way to bring about change: through organizing actors seek to create the alternative they wish to have (Parker, Cheney, Fournier, & Land, 2014; Western, 2014). Such 'organizing for alternative' has been prominent in the studies of anarchist movements (Land & King, 2014; Parker et al., 2014) that have examined anti-hierarchical distributed leadership models (Western, 2014), self-organization (Collister, 2014) and democratic practices (Land & King, 2014). More recently, some scholars have also pointed out the meaning of everyday organizing (Melucci, 1996; Reedy, King, & Coupland, 2016; Tiratelli, 2017; Véron, 2016). From this point of view, organizing for change becomes synonymous with living (Véron, 2016).

Coming back to the concept of partial organization presented by Ahrne and Brunsson (2011), these partial forms of organization can be a deliberate choice rather than a failed attempt to form a complete organization. Organizers can decide to include and exclude elements of organization according to their goals and resources. For example, anarchist movements deliberately avoid hierarchies (Western, 2014). In addition, partial organizing can be a reaction to organization imposed by others and an effort to seek for a more preferred alternative (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011).

Ahrne and Brunsson (2011) recognize several reasons for adopting less than all organizational elements. A reason to exclude some elements of a complete organization can be that the desired form already exists and more organization is not needed. For example, the International Labour Organization has decided to provide standards and recommendations but leaves monitoring them to other organizations (International Labour Organization, n.d.). Another reason for partial organization can be that the field where the organization operates in has established norms and practices that guide organization. Consequently, it is then not necessary to decide on all aspects as actors rely on shared field-specific practices. Examples of such organizations are universities that have established traditions of reviewing scientific work. Having a low degree of organization can also be advantageous for the organizers as it can require fewer resources such as time, money and personnel. Especially social movements tend to have limited resources (Briscoe & Gupta, 2016; King & Soule, 2007), which can cause them to avoid adopting more organizational elements. All in all, partial organization can be based on both practical and ideological reasons, and be used as a means to bring about change.

However, in some cases, also the opposite can happen: the organizers or members might demand for more organizational elements (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011). For example, if the organization has a system of monitoring, members can require explicit rules about the action required or a sanction system to reward and punish for certain behaviors. The organizers might also want to make a decision to exclude certain type of members if the size of the organization grows or inappropriate behavior occurs.

The first part of this chapter has discussed three prominent forms and perspectives into organizing: network, institution and organization, both as a partial and complete organization. In addition, this section has described how organizing in a certain

organizational form can be used as a means to achieve change and to create an alternative for an existing or a dominant system.
The next section moves on to discuss another concept that has been used to describe how actors seek change to dominating power. Moreover, the following section shifts the focus of discussion closer to social movements rather than other types of collectives or organizations: it examines the concept and meaning of space in social movements.

2.2 Social movement spaces

Space has been a central element in many social movements. In 2011 the Occupy movement activists conquered Zucotti park in New York (Langman, 2013), and in the same year in Spain activists occupied a hotel in the centre of the capital (Abellán, Sequera, & Janoschka, 2012). Meanwhile in London people selected riot locations based on meanings attached to those specific sites (Tiratelli, 2017). Most recently, protesters turned the harbour and main streets of Hamburg into a mass protest against a G20 meeting (Oltermann, 2017).

The concept of space has received attention in social movement literature for few decades (e.g., Polletta, 1999; Oslender, 2004; Taylor, 1989; Tétreault, 1993; Thörnberg & Thörnberg, 2017). The examples above describe the geographical and physical dimensions of spaces (Creasap, 2016) as well as the symbolic value of specific iconic sites (Tiratelli, 2017). However, the concept of space in social movements can also be more subtle and abstract.

Like organizations, spaces can also be regarded from multiple perspectives. Oslender (2004) provides three illustrative perspectives to the constitution of spaces as a location, a locale and sense of space. Location means the more broad setting of “the physical geographical area and the ways in which it is affected by economic and political processes operating at a wider scale” (Oslender, 2004, p. 961). Thus, this perspective looks at the wider economic and political conditions that originate outside the space such as institutional logics or political practices like democratic voting. The second dimension, locale, is defined as “the formal and informal settings in which everyday social interactions and relations are constituted" (Oslender, 2004, p. 962). Rather than static physical settings, locale refers also to the everyday reproduction and construction of these spaces through the social actor's interactions and communication (Oslender, 2004).

The third dimension is sense of place, which "refers to the ways in which human experience and imagination appropriates the physical characteristics and qualities of geographical location" (Oslender, 2004, p. 962). Thus, the third perspective highlights the subjective element of space based on experiences and interaction in and with the space. More broadly, Oslender's (2004) taxonomy provides a framework for understanding space in three levels: 1) the broader environment (such as the national context) and elements given 'from the outside' of the space, 2) the everyday interactive social construction of a space (community or movement level) and 3) the individual experience such as meaning and identity construction. In other terms, these could also be regarded as the environment of a movement, the movement organization and its structure, and the actors within the movement. This study will mainly focus on the construction of the settings of the movement space.

Regarding the construction and organization of spaces, social movement can both occupy and produce spaces (Della Porta & Fabbri, 2016). Examples mentioned in the beginning of this chapter depict movements occupying landmark spaces such as Zucotti park. However, simultaneously, the activists were assigning new meanings to places and contesting the use of space by camping in areas they were not permitted to camp (Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012). Through contesting the use and meaning of spaces activists could produce new spaces through their action (Della Porta & Fabbri, 2016; Tiratelli, 2017). By setting up an alternative community in the park (Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012) the activists produced what Martin and Miller (2003) refer to as a resistance space or counter-space, where the activist utilized protest through lived space.

The notion of space as a resistance and protection is prominent among social movement researchers. Several authors describe free spaces or protected spaces (e.g., Tétreault,

1993) that are “small-scale settings within a movement or a community” (Polletta, 1999, p. 1), existing outside the direct control of dominant groups and providing actors capacities to challenge the status quo (Futrell & Simi, 2004; Kellogg, 2009; Polletta, 1999; Tétreault, 1993; Thörnberg & Thörnberg, 2017). From another point of view, these are also spaces for exclusion: they are not ‘free’ to enter but exclusive and isolated. Research on sensitive issues such as gender (Taylor, 1989; Tétreault, 1993) and racial issues (Fisher & Kling, 1987; Futrell & Simi, 2004) has often focused on the importance of these ‘protective’ spaces offering a place to escape experienced oppression.

However, including the dominant groups can improve the movement’s ability to achieve change. Kellogg (2009) showed in her study that inclusion, not exclusion, of the opposing party made the efforts to change practices successful in a hospital. Furthermore, Furnari’s (2014) theory of practice generation in part-time small-scale settings implies that involving actors from a variety of fields provides a fruitful setting for collective experimentation and new practice generation. Furthermore, high diversity of participants or members suggests also a diversity of logics as actors bring with them the institutionalized practices from their respective fields (Furnari, 2014). This in turn can enable creating a space where the goals of actors may conflict but collaboration and consensus, and even innovation, is possible (Hardy, 1991; Jay, 2012).

Taking such a pluralistic approach to movements has implications to the definition of a movement. Rather than viewing a movement as a fairly unified actor or a collectivity (see e.g., Soule, 2012A) this study follows the view presented by Diani (1992) and King and Soule (2007) and defines movements as individuals or groups of individuals and/or organizations that engage in collective action. However, whereas Diani (1992) bases the group on shared collective identities, King and Soule (2007) name fixing a perceived social injustice as the uniting factor of the group. Diani’s (1992) view represents a so-called culturalist approach to social movement studies that focuses on shared identities and collective frames (see e.g., Benford & Snow, 2000). King and Soule’s (2007) definition on the other hand relies on the tradition of resource mobilization theory (see e.g., McCarthy & Zald, 1977). From the cultural perspective, spaces have been studied as sites for creating and strengthening collective identities and action frames (Futrell & Simi, 2004). In contrast, from the perspective of the resource mobilization theory, spaces have been viewed as places to gather resources for political action (Kellogg, 2008). However, to study movements that allow or even thrive on pluralism, a different approach is needed.

The two aforementioned perspectives represent an instrumental view of organizing movement spaces: spaces are utilized to create a collective identity or an action frame (Futrell & Simi, 2004), or used as sites to gather and build resources (Kellogg, 2008), both of which aim ultimately to mobilize social movement actors. Haug (2013) suggests turning this logic the other way around and placing the emphasis on the organization and the spaces themselves. Instead of viewing spaces as organized for mobilizing actors and claims, he suggests focusing on the organization of a space as the goal of the movement and as a measure of its success. This allows examining movements as spaces for a variety of actors with individual interests and overcoming a problematic assumption that a movement as a whole can, or wants to, formulate specific aims and measures for success (Giugni, 1999).

Furthermore, Toch defined movements already in 1965 as an effort by people "to solve collectively a problem they feel they have in common" (as cited in Tajfel 1981, p. 244). This draws the attention to the interaction between the actors aimed at improving something or finding a solution that would benefit them. This definition does not exclude the possibility of solving multiple problems or finding multiple solutions, which makes it useful for viewing pluralistic modern movements. Building on this view, this study approaches social movements as 'individuals or groups of individuals and/or organizations that engage to organize a collective space for interaction and problem solving'.

This section has discussed the definitions and conceptualizations of space in social movement research as well as defined this study's approach based on existing literature.

Next section continues discussing the concept of space by taking a specific example of an organized space into focus: meetings.

2.3 Meetings as key unit of organizing

In terms of organization, meetings are a prominent standard activity (Scott, Shanock, & Rogelberg, 2012; Rogelberg, Scott, & Kello, 2007). Actors spend a significant amount of time in meetings at workplaces and movements, which translates to considerable financial, temporal and personal costs to participants and organizers (Haug; 2013, Rogelberg et al., 2007; Scott et al., 2012). Furthermore, Kauffeld and Lehmann-Willenbrock (2012) suggest that meeting processes shape both the short-term team as well as long-term organizational outcomes. Hence, meetings matter greatly for organizations.

In his seminal work, Schwartzman (as cited in Jarzabkowski & Seidl, 2008) defined meetings as planned gatherings of three or more people who assemble for a purpose that serves some organizational or group function. For example, to solve a problem all participants have in common. As such, meetings differ from casual encounters as they are organized for a specific organizational purpose and thus always formal (Jarzabkowski & Seidl, 2008). In addition, meetings are organized in a specific location at a specific time, making them situated in a specific context. Consequently, meetings can be viewed as a "situated, socially accomplished activity" that is also a scheduled routine and occurring social practice (Jarzabkowski & Seidl, 2008, p. 1392). On the other hand, meetings can also be unique and significant incidents such as at times of organizational crisis (Jarzabkowski & Seidl, 2008).

Meetings serve multiple pivotal functions such as coordinating and communicating about tasks (Sonnentag, 2001), which includes sharing information, assigning responsibility, making decisions, gathering ideas, negotiating and reporting progress (Köhler et al., 2012; Rogelberg et al., 2007). In addition, Jarzabkowski and Seidl (2008) suggest that meeting is as a key activity for practicing strategy and a strategic activity in itself. Rogelberg et al. (2007) add that meetings provide leaders a possibility to communicate their vision and craft responses to external opportunities and challenges affecting the organization. From the perspective of the participants, meetings can help increase employee involvement and socialization (Rogelberg et al., 2007) as well as establish trust between participants (Haug, 2013).

Ultimately, meetings are also sites for face-to-face communication (Haug, 2013). Köhler et al. (2012) suggest that meetings are an organizational communication genre like memos, seminars and emails (Im, Yates, & Orlikowski, 2005; Orlikowski & Yates, 1994). As such, meetings can be seen as socially embedded institutions that are based on norms guiding expectations and practices regarding the purpose, content, structure and timing of meetings as well as the roles of participants (Köhler et al., 2012). Thus, meetings can be seen as an institutionalized form of communication and form a template for the social interaction that takes place within meetings (Yates & Orlikowski, 1992, 2002).

The descriptions above describe the different sides of meetings. Namely, meetings represent an example of a dual structure (Gerhards & Rucht, 1992). A meeting includes both a) the meeting event, which includes the actual interaction of the participants and activities they engage in, and b) the setting in which the meeting activity takes place and which can be institutionalized (Haug, 2013). Although conceptually separable, in practice these two are intertwined. The setting of a meeting both structures the interactions of participants as well as is the result of the interaction (Haug, 2013). From the perspective of space, meetings are arenas where organization, institutionalized norms and values are both enacted and recreated (Rogelberg et al., 2007; Yates & Orlikowski, 1992), much like Oslender (2004) described the locale that actors simultaneously construct and live in.

This leads to the last section of this literature review. The literature discussed is summarized by the concept of meeting arena, which combines the three aspects of organizing (institution, network and partial organization) and the construction of meetings as organized movement spaces.

2.4 Meetings as hybrid arenas

In the beginning of this chapter, three different approaches to organizing were discussed: network, institution and (partial) organization. Rather than arguing between the concepts, Haug (2013) presents a novel conceptualization of movement meetings as a hybrid of all the three perspectives. Whereas network is based on inter-actor relationships and trust, and institution on common norms, organization can be seen as based on decisions regarding five key organizational elements: membership, hierarchy, monitoring, sanctions and rules (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011). Studying movements as a result of three social orders enables investigating both the emergent and decided side of organizing space. This perspective both introduces a decision-based view of organization to study social movement as a space as well as helps to understand the complex reality of organizing, where pluralism is more of a norm rather than an exception (Greenwood et al., 2010; Haug, 2013).

Figure 1 depicts the structure of a meeting arena, which refers to the settings and organization of a meeting (Haug, 2013). In the middle of the framework is the meeting event, which refers to the interactions that take place in the meeting settings. The corners depict the three perspectives that structure the meeting in their own respective ways.

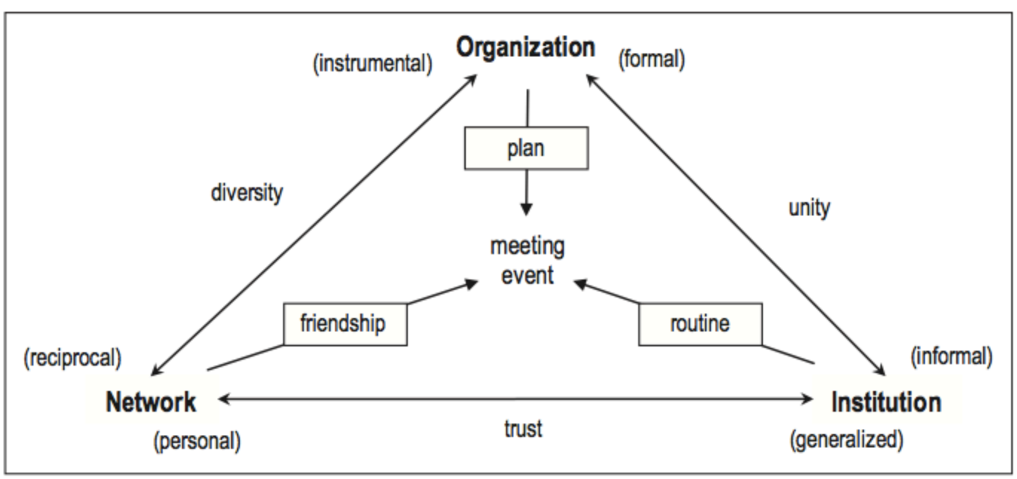

Figure 1. Meeting arena as a hybrid. (Haug, 2013)

The triangle's sides (arrows) describe the relationships between the logics, and the concepts written in between them mark resources that each two perspectives have in common. Firstly, organizations and institutions both rely on unity. Where the unity of an organization is a formal one, the unity of an institution is based on an informal sense of unity. Secondly, an institution and a network are both reliant on trust, but the trust in networks is a personal one while in institutions the trust is generalized. Thirdly, diversity is important for both networks and organizations. However, for an organization diversity is instrumental aiming at a specific goal while in a network diversity is reciprocal being the "result of mutual valuation of each interpersonal tie" (Haug, 2013, p. 714).

In his framework Haug (2013) utilizes the definition by Ahrne and Brunsson (2011) by defining organization as a decided order consisting of five or less organizational elements: membership, hierarchy, rules, monitoring and sanctions. From the perspective of an organization, order is achieved through formalization, thus a meeting requires a plan to ensure the smooth conduct of the event. This includes deciding on central elements of the meeting such as the agenda and location (Haug, 2013). Depending on the goals and resources of the organization, the context of organizing and the preferences of participants, the degree of organization can vary from complete organization (all five organizational elements) to partial organization (less than five elements) (Ahrne and Brunsson, 2011).

From the perspective of an institution, planning is not needed as participants trust that they share a latent agreement about the norms, values and practices of organizing, which are enacted and confirmed in routines and rituals in meetings (Haug, 2013). The established cultural practices can be called a meeting style. Meeting style can dictate which aspects are decided and which are not, such as the need for selecting a meeting chair. Decisions are not seen always necessary as possible disagreements are expected to resolve themselves 'naturally' through the development of a shared identity. The meeting practices or the organization can also be taken for granted, in which case no formal decisions would be seen as necessary (Haug, 2013).

Lastly, from the perspective of a network, "the meeting event appears as an event where personal ties are created and fostered" (Haug, 2013, p. 718). Friendship is a central feature in the sense that meeting allows the participants to socialize freely and to get to know the friends of their friends as all actors in the network are expected to be first- or second-order friends (Haug, 2013). Hence, in Haug's (2013) framework, a network is based on relatively tight interpersonal relationships, compared to the more loose approach presented in the previous section. Those ties form also the 'glue' of the network as the fact that everyone knows everyone either personally or through a mutual friend creates trust between the participants. Moreover, no plan or common norms are needed in a pure network meeting, as the goals of the individuals are the driver instead of a shared goal (Haug, 2013).

As illustrated above, each form offers a different perspective on the meeting arena. However, each type has also central limitations when regarded in their ideal-typical form, which makes it likely that a meeting arena is based on more than one form. The problem of decided order is the ultimate decision about who will decide. To break the vicious cycle, the decider has to either be taken for granted or the decision maker has to be trusted (Haug, 2013). The challenge for an institution is that unity and agreement are taken for granted but participants are diverse. Meeting face-to-face challenges the imagined unity, and somebody might break the unwritten norms. If disputes do not resolve 'naturally', the participants have to either make a formal decision about sanctions or exclusion, or then utilize the personal relationships to ask somebody to comply as a favor for a friend. The problem of a network is 'getting things done' as they are inherently a collection of individuals mobilized by their individual goals rather than collective action. To form a collective actor from a network, either a collective identity based on shared norms must be created or participants have to decide about organizational elements and respect them. (Haug, 2013).

All in all, the three logics describe and help understand the settings of a meeting. Analyzing a 'meeting arena' as the settings of the meeting includes two sides: identifying the characteristics of the meeting arena (meeting frequency, topics, participant numbers and types, meeting style etc.) and the relationships of the arena to other arenas in the field (omitted from Figure 1 by the author) (Haug, 2013).

Finally, Haug's (2013) framework and the definition of social movement formulated earlier in this section form together the approach utilized in this study. The framework presents social movement meetings as a space organized by individuals or a group of individuals. The settings of the space, or the meeting arena have features of (partial) organization, network and institution, which all guide the organization of the space differently. Organizing the space becomes the goal in itself for actors seeking to fulfill their diverse and individual goals, and they gather to interact and solve problems.

The next chapter will describe the research process and the path taken to produce the final findings of this study.

3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

This chapter describes the research process, data collection, and analytical methods used as well as arguments for the methodological choices and the quality of this study. Section 3.1 presents the choice of research strategy and fundamental assumptions made in the beginning of the research process. Section 3.2 continues by describing the choice and collection of data, and section 3.3 discusses the sample obtained, the timeline of data collection and some limitations of the collected data. Section 3.4 illustrates the analytic procedures taken to arrive at conclusions about the case material. Finally, section 3.5 evaluates the trustworthiness of the study (3.5.1) and ethical aspects of this research process (3.5.2).

However, the style of this section differs from the traditional scientific writing used in other chapters of this report. As will be discussed in the upcoming chapter, the researcher is a central part of the study, which is why this chapter shows the writer as active by using the first person instead of passive voice when describing the choices made.

Throughout this chapter, I describe the research process as it was shaped in the course of the research project, starting from initial conceptualizations and ideas that developed into the final research questions that were presented in section 1.2. Choosing this approach allows better transparency and more informed evaluation of the research (see section 3.5).

3.1 Research approach

The research started from a state of curiosity rather than with a specific theoretical framework or fixed research questions. I was interested in the form of the case organization (and whether or not it *was* an organization), why it existed and how it related to other groups and the larger technological development. For that reason, my first intention was to understand not only the group itself as a closed system but rather its position within a larger context as well as the actors operating within the settings of this group. As Farquhar (2012, pp. 23) notes: “To interpret a phenomenon, the researcher must look at its parts in terms of its whole and the whole in terms of its parts.”

To make sense of this multifaceted phenomenon and to understand its features, function and meaning, I chose to conduct my research as an intensive case study. The strength of a case study approach is enabling a thorough investigation of a phenomenon using multiple sources of data (Yin, 2002) and providing a “thick, holistic and contextualized description” (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008, pp. 120). Furthermore, scholars have suggested case study as a particularly appropriate strategy when the researcher aims to understand and describe a phenomena rather than give prescriptions (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). As the motivation for this study was also to investigate and understand a phenomenon that can possibly give a new angle in understanding organization, change and social movements, my approach was rather exploratory.

At this point it is worth noting my philosophical stance and assumptions of the nature of reality and knowledge as they guide the further methodological choices and evaluation of the study. Following mostly a subjectivist notion, I assume that reality is a product of both social and cognitive processes (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008), fluid, located in the mind and subject to change over time and context (Farquhar, 2012). However, I do take a step from pure subjectivism towards a more pragmatic view of reality and research, assuming that while reality is constructed in the mind and subjective, we also hold ‘common sense’ that we learn and adopt from the society around us (Farquhar, 2012), and use it to make sense of our actions and those of others. Hence, albeit we each construct our own realities, there is still a culturally transmitted common stock of knowledge we can deploy to make sense of the reality.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that the researcher herself is inherently an active agent and medium through which the study is conducted and interpreted. This implies that the same data can have multiple possible interpretations, which can all be potentially meaningful (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). It is to be noted that the researcher’s previous experiences, knowledge and values affect what he or she observes and does not observe, and perceives interesting, important or irrelevant (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Farquhar, 2012). Thus, I as the researcher am a central component of the study, affecting the research process from the selection and definition of research questions to carrying out data collection and interpreting the results. I am a 25 year-old woman born and raised in Finland, having majored in management and organization studies in my Bachelor and Master degrees at Aalto University of Business. I do not consider myself as an expert in qualitative research but have a keen interest in its ability to systematically increase our understanding of topical issues. In this research I offer my organized understanding of the phenomena studied in a certain time and context.

My subjectivist-interpretivist approach leaning towards pragmatism affects also my choice of research methods. Although qualitative and quantitative research methods have traditionally been seen as incompatible opposites, a mixed approach of these two has been recently deployed in case studies to produce a richer description of the case (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Farquhar, 2012).

Combining qualitative and quantitative data can offer multiple enriching perspectives. Taking into account my objective to understand the case organization from multiple perspectives, studying not only its features and characteristics (e.g., number of members, location of meetings) but its meaning (e.g., why does this organization exists, what goals does it serve for the participants), I base my research primarily on qualitative data using interviews. I complement the picture with quantitative data retrieved from meetup.com website, on which the group has its sustained 'location' outside meetings including records of group members, meetups and feedback as well as discussion about the group and its events. Consequently, my primary data relies on the notion of knowledge being located within social interactions and individuals, and complement this picture by additional secondary statistics describing the group.

Having covered the research approach and philosophical assumptions of this study, I next discuss the theoretical assumptions I had in the beginning of the research. While the research was partly sparked by theoretical ambiguity of the case organization, I did have and develop initial theoretical assumptions before data collection. Additionally, the subjectivist tradition of qualitative research notes that the researcher is not a tabula rasa but inevitably holds some theoretical knowledge and assumptions (Eskola & Suoranta, 1998).

Having studied management and organizations, the natural starting point for me was to start in the field of organizational theory to understand the possible conceptualization of the case. Another assumption guiding my initial reading concerned the topic of the group, Ethereum, as an especially value-laden and ideologically driven technology. Thus, I assumed that the phenomenon at hand was a) an organization of some kind and b) the organization, through its topic, would have an ideological perspective driving the organization. Combining these two assumptions, I arrived at the intersection of social movement and organizational literature, which combines the concepts of formal organization and ideologically driven movements. Together these literature streams provided a lens to look at key aspects of an organization: structure, resources, goals, tactics, membership, impact and identity. After reviewing the major scholars and research streams of social movement research, focusing especially on the intersection of organizational and social movement research, I participated in one of the Ethereum Helsinki meetups to do a preliminary assessment of the fit between the research target and theory. As my observations from that meeting seemed to find counterparts in the social movement literature, I decided to continue using ‘social movement’ as my guiding theoretical conceptualization when moving to data collection.

3.2 Data collection

As described in the previous section, I exploit interviews as my primary research material, complementing it with meetup.com visitor data received from the organizer and administrator of the online group. The purpose of collecting visitor data was understanding the development of the group over time and evaluating its effectiveness in terms of attracting and mobilizing new members, which has been considered one of the signs or measures of an 'successful' social movement organization (Briscoe & Gupta, 2016; Giugni, 1998; Polletta & Jasper, 2001; Weber & King, 2005).

In the beginning of the research, I also analyzed the meetup.com website and the group's page there, the posts, feedback given, meeting schedule as well as social media accounts linked to the group (Youtube and Facebook) to identify active members and typical topics discussed in the group. However, the group's activity and content posted in social media and meetup.com page was scarce. This indicated that the main arena of discussion in this group was the meetup, and thus the meetings were the focus point.

I chose interviews as my main method of data collection due to the richness of the method and explorative nature of the study. Moreover, interviews are a widely deployed and recommended method in case studies (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Eskola & Suoranta, 1998; Kvale, 2007; Yin, 2002). However, interviewing as a research method is also subject to limitations caused by the interactive nature of an interview. The researcher has a conscious and unconscious influence (Eskola & Suoranta, 1998) by for example directing the informant's speech with verbal cues and gestures and the relationship between the interviewee and the informant affects the extent to which the informant feels confident to speak. In this case I interviewed as an 'outsider', having met most of my informants once before the interview. However, as an in-depth ethnographic description was not the subject of this research, I do not consider this being a central issue in this study.

I also considered using observation as a research method, but chose not to do so due to ethical concerns and difficulty of access. Obtaining an informed research permit from all participants in advance would have been difficult because of the open nature of the group (open invitations, no obligatory sign up, people arriving to the meeting at different times). In addition, due to the highly confidential atmosphere in the group, observation without informing the participants would have been against the observed spirit and values of the group, and from my ethical point of view dubious, possibly harming the relationship between prospective interviewees and the researcher-informant relationship. Thus, due to ethical concerns and difficulty of access, observation was ruled out. However, although no systematic observation in the form of detailed field notes was used, my observations and experiences in the group as a participant are reflected in the collection and analysis of the data, literature selection, and interviews in terms of what themes appeared interesting to ask.

The structure and format of the interviews were designed to fit the specific purposes of this study by combining theme interview and open interview technique. The benefit of theme-based interviews is providing a prescribed structure that ensures consistency by covering the same main themes with all participants. Additionally, it allows variation in the exact wording, order and extent to which each theme or question is discussed, producing an interview style closer to an informal conversation aiming to create a fruitful and confidential interaction situation (Eskola & Suoranta, 1998). The purpose of combining theme-based interview with open interview technique was to allow the informant to rephrase and explain their views, and to give additional perspectives that they found interesting or important, enabling the discovery of themes and issues possibly disregarded by the researcher, working in the spirit of exploration.

The interviews lasted 45–60 minutes. Theme-based, researcher led discussion took around 30 minutes of the interview and the rest were open discussion around the topic led by the informant. Additionally, in the beginning of each interview, the purpose of the research, confidentiality, recording of the data, anonymity of the respondents, voluntary participation and the exclusivity of the data utilization were discussed with each participant, ensuring that the interviewees were informed about their contribution and rights regarding the research process.

The interview guide (Appendix I) describes the official structure of the interviews. The interview guide consisted of three main parts:

1) Information about the purpose of the study and the rights of the participant
2) A short background questionnaire to complete researcher's own background research

3) List of interview themes with guiding questions under each theme. These themes concerned key characteristics of a social movement organization derived from extensive literature review and were complemented by my own observations as a participant in the group.

The following section describes the interviewee sample, timeline for the data collection, data limitations and ethical concerns taken into account while collecting the data.

3.3 Sample and selection of informants

The sample of this study consists of the members of Ethereum Helsinki Meetup. Ethereum Helsinki Meetup is a group facilitated through 'Meetup' online platform (www.meetup.com) that allows users to set up groups according to their shared interests and to organize meetings for group members. Joining the group and the meetings is voluntary, free and open to everyone but requires a registration to the Meetup platform.

At the time of starting the study (16.11.2016) the group held 133 members of which around 15–25 attended monthly meetings (Appendix III) taking place every second Wednesday of the month. These frequent participants were the first focus of the data collection as I assumed them to have the richest knowledge of the working of the group as well as have a strong personal connection or agenda, which draws them to the meetings repeatedly. However, as the data collection progressed, the target sample was modified to include a variety of informants differing in their 'seniority' level in the group (measured by the number of meetup visits) and their background, aiming at collecting a sample that would best reflect the observed nature of the meetups as a meeting point for novel and advanced, young and old, coming from a business, academic or technical background.

I utilized multiple methods in identifying and approaching prospective interviewees. Firstly, I attended the group meeting to identify informants and to establish a personal relationship, as recommended by Haug (2013). Before the meeting, my thesis supervisor helped establishing a connection between me and the organizer, and I agreed with the organizer that I could study the group. In the meeting the group's founder and organizer presented my study inviting participants on my behalf. After the meeting, I sent an email invitation to those who had given me their contact information. Simultaneously, I sent a general invitation online in the meetup.com group to all participants and contacted the most active participants that I had not met yet via private message through the meetup.com platform. The choice of interviewees was limited by access (availability of contact information) and availability (timing) as well as interviewees' own interest to participate.

The sample consists of eight one-to-one interviews carried out in January 2017. The interviewees came from different sectors from IT and software to finance and education, four being entrepreneurs with a business related to blockchain or Ethereum, three being industry experts and one being an independent researcher. All interviewees lived in Finland, and the interviews were conducted in Finnish, as it was the mother tongue of all the interviewees and the researcher. All interviewees were male due to the scarcity of women in the group, especially among the most active members. The informants ranged in age from 28 to 52, with most in their 30s or 40s. As experience level of the group was used as a sampling criterion, I categorized the interviewees according to their seniority level in the group as follows:

- Newcomers: maximum 2 visits (3 interviewees)
- Regulars: three to five visits (2 interviewees)
- Seniors: six or more visits (3 interviewees)

Additionally, one interviewee was also one of the two founders and organizers of the group. Six of the interviewees I had met before prior to the interview and two of the interviews I came to know either through a reference of a mutual contact (1) or by contacting them directly via meetup.com platform (1).

After the eighth interview I decided to stop the data collection, as no new aspects seemed to appear, despite of the diversity of interviewees, following the recommendation by Eskola and Suoranta, (1998) that data should be collected only as much as necessary. In addition, I utilized a 'snowball-method' (Eskola & Suoranta, 1998) asking interviewees to refer next possible interviewees until same names started to repeat. Some time after the interviews I contacted the organizers to ask for any reports or additional data they might have, and was provided with the data on member statistics and sign ups through meetup.com website.

3.3.1 Timeline of data collection

Table 2 illustrates the three phases of data collection. First phase of the research consisted of analyzing comments posted in the Ethereum Helsinki Meetup group and associated social media channels as well as visiting the meetup on December 14th, 2016. The purpose of attending the meetup was to observe the settings of the meeting, to test initial theory conceptualization, and to locate and gain access to prospective interviewees. The second phase consisted of interviews with eight members of the group and visiting the Ethereum Helsinki meetup on January 11th, 2017. The last phase consisted of contacting the organizers to receive data on the membership base and participation rates.

Table 2. Timeline of data collection.

Phase	*Year*	*Month*	*Description*
1	*2016* *2016*	*November–December* *Mid-December*	*Analysis of Ethereum Meetup Helsinki site on meetup.com, Youtube and Facebook** *Visit to the group's meeting*
2	*2017* *2017*	*January* *Mid-January*	*Interview data collection* *Visit to the group's meeting*
3	*2017*	*April*	*Retrieval of member statistics from meetup.com platform*

** Overlapping with initial literature reading*

3.3.2 Data limitations and ethical considerations

The data collection procedures and the resulting material are subject to certain limitations. Firstly, the case focuses on a certain period of time, the group's first year of existence. The data is based on the experiences of interviewees and the meetings they have attended, and might not describe the experiences of every participant. Secondly, I acknowledge the researcher's influence in the data collection. As mentioned in the previously in section 3.1, I had prevailing assumptions of the nature of the organization (social movement) and its nature (ideological). This guided the type of questions I asked, as shown in the interview guide, and this might have lead the informants to regard some possibly fruitful topics. Related to the downsides of using theme-based interview technique, the respondents could also have missed something important because it was not directly asked. Additionally, people tend to focus on things that they can remember at that moment, and the same respondent might give a different answer if interviewed again in another time and place (Eskola & Suoranta, 1998).

The role of ethics has received increasing attention in business research (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008), and ethical considerations are also visible in the research design and process of this study. As mentioned in the earlier chapter, I chose not to conduct observations due to my concerns of obtaining an informed consent from all participants as well as respecting the confidential relationship between the researcher and the people in the focus of the research. Secondly, during the data collection I followed the general ethical guidelines for research by Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) and Finnish Social Science Data Archive's Data management guidelines based on the Finnish Legislation (Finnish Social Science Data Archive, n.d.). This included obtaining an informed consent, making the participation explicitly voluntary, and ensuring the privacy of the informants and the confidentiality of the data gathered.

Having discussed how the research was designed and how the data was collected, I next describe the path from collected data to my conclusions.

3.4 Data analysis

This section outlines the analytical process from data collection through analysis to insights. I will discuss each step in detail in this section, starting with the choice of analysis method and measures taken to prepare the data for analysis.

Considering that I was interested in the characteristics of this group and its members, I chose a so-called realistic approach to my analysis focusing on what the data says about the research topic rather than how people talk about it or construct meanings around it (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka 2006). To organize and interpret the data, I utilized analytic strategies (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) and coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Eskola & Suoranta, 1998; Gibbs, 2007). Coding, also sometimes called as categorizing, means "attaching one or more keywords to a text segment in order to permit later identification of a statement" (p. 105, Kvale 2007) in order to organize and condense information (Eskola & Suoranta, 1998). In this paper, I use the term 'category' to refer to a prominent code with sub-categories, a set of codes, and the term 'code' to refer to a single code.

To prepare the data for analysis, each interview recording was transcribed, which was done within a week from each interview to ensure important details about the interview situation were written down. While transcribing, all names appearing in the script as well as the names of the interviewees were transformed into code names, and interviews were ordered and labeled (e.g., "H4 Newcomer 2"). The setting of the interview was also written down (e.g., "reserved public meeting room, no distractions").

After transcribing the data, I began a systematic process of reading and analyzing depicted in Figure 2. The process consisted of six main steps, divided into three parts: data-driven (explorative) coding, theory-based coding and merging results into the final model.

Data driven coding	**1) Open coding** • line by line coding 50% • descriptive codes **2) Merging codes** • developing analytic codes • reorganization of categories **3) Comparison** • contrasting similarities and differences with other 50% of data **4) Merging codes** • reorganization of main and sub-categories • analytic coding
Theory driven coding	**5) Theory comparison** • developing and testing theory-based coding scheme: • Haug (2013)
Merging	**6) Merging codes & conceptual development** • comparing and merging data-derived and theory-derived codes • validation of coding scheme through comparison

Figure 2. Analytic process.

I followed the framework and instructions of Corbin and Strauss (2008) and Gibbs (2007) during my coding process. After first reading the transcribed material few times to familiarize with the data, I followed a method of ‘open coding’ (1) adopted from grounded theory research to explore data. I used line-by-line coding to make the most use of the data and to discover aspects that were not considered during the data collection. As suggested by Eskola and Suoranta (1998), I split the material in half and used open coding first only to the other half of the data. While coding, each code was also organized under higher-level categories such as ‘activity’, ‘setting’ or ‘consequence’ adopted from (Gibbs, 2007). As a second step (2), all the created codes were brought together and organized under more analytic categories relating concepts to each other while removing possible duplicates (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Gibbs, 2007), also called as axial or analytic coding. This resulted in an initial list of over 400 codes.

As a third step (3), I used the remaining 50% of the data that was not coded in the first step to conduct a comparative analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), comparing incidents and codes for similarities and differences. This was done to both validate the codes created as well as to complement the analysis with new codes. As a fourth step (4), all codes were once again brought together. In this phase the initial general categories adopted from Gibbs (2007) were re-conceptualized and re-organized. For example, Gibb's framework included a category of 'Behaviors' (acts), which contained only two codes. In a closer examination, these two codes found a more suitable place under 'Activities' (longer duration than acts happening in a particular setting, may involve other people). Analytic coding was also continued by transforming and organizing descriptive codes under higher-level analytic codes (e.g., 'seeking to meet people interested in the same topics' → 'connecting').

Moving to step 5 marked a change in the approach. With the initial coding schema developed in steps 1–4, I changed the perspective from data to theory. This change was done to locate the data in the light of current research and to conceptualize the organization. Using both data and theory based coding aimed at a thorough analysis of the data and arriving at insights that extend any single theoretical model. Table 3 presents the main categories developed by step 4. Subcategories have been omitted for the sake of clarity.

Table 3. Main categories derived from data.

Activities	Organization & Structure	Actors	Settings (of the meetups)	Inter-organizational
Discussion Holding presentations <u>Results of activities:</u> Sense making/learning Connecting	Round table Authority Atmosphere Routines Purpose Definitions	Diversity Goals Background Vision/ideology Self-referred identity	'Blockchain hype' Technological context	Brokerage Spreading Consequences Locating the group

Step 5 (Figure 2) included selecting theory and probing the data. I chose the triangular framework by Haug (2013) (Figure 1, section 2.4) for three main reasons. Firstly,

although not originally included in the interview guide, all interviewees highlighted the importance and value of the face-to-face meetings, which is the basis of Haug's premise. Secondly, as my interviewees told about their relationship with the group and its other members, it became clear that the meetings themselves were the focus and priority, not the concept of a 'group' or what it could do as a collective actor. One of my interviewees explained "The meetup group itself is not in a sense central. But what happens in the group and when those contacts are created... and what kind of lives on... from that… That's what is sought here". Consequently, as in Haug's (2013) model, the purpose of the group was not to mobilize people to take certain action (e.g., boycott) but to serve as a platform or a space in which actors can create something that is aligned with their individual goals. The third reason was that the framework allows for a multisided analysis of the phenomenon by bringing three central organizational perspectives together, which facilitates a thorough investigation of the phenomenon. The suitability of Haug's framework was tested by transforming central concepts of the article into codes and applying them to the data.

In the final step, all data- and theory-based codes were put together. The resulting coding schema can be found in Appendix II.

In addition to steps described in Figure 2, I also deployed two additional analytic strategies suggested by Corbin and Strauss (2008) throughout the analytic process. Firstly, I utilized memoing as a method to track, document and spark the analytic process. Second, I deployed negative case analysis (seeking for things in the data that do not match the interpretation) to ensure the consistency of codes and increase the quality of my findings (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

As a result of the analytic process, my research questions developed. According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) it is not only common but also advisable that the exact research questions develop and transform during the study, and the structure of the research should be flexible enough to allow this. The final, transformed research question came to be: What characteristics do movement meeting spaces have (1) and how are these meetings spaces organized (2)?

As a final part of the discussion about data analysis, I shortly note the language used in the analysis. All interviews were conducted in Finnish, as it was the mother tongue of all participants. The data was also first analyzed in Finnish to produce the first set of codes. The codes were then translated into English, and English was used in the later phases of the analysis to develop a coding schema. In the translation process, I utilized a thinking technique suggested by Corbin and Strauss (2008) to look for all possible meanings of the word in Finnish, and then compare them to English alternatives, deciding the best translation based on the context of the interview and the speaker. Citations from the interviews were produced utilizing the same technique.

3.5 Evaluation of the research process

I conclude this chapter by discussing quality criteria developed for qualitative research and case studies, and note the ethical considerations that were taken into account throughout the planning and execution of this study.

3.5.1 Trustworthiness of the study

The evaluation of qualitative research is a consistent debate among scholars (e.g., Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Denzin & Lincoln, 2002; Given, 2008). However, for studies following an interpretative research tradition, such as this case, there has emerged a set of common criteria under a constructivist approach (Given, 2008). This approach differs from the positivist/realist tradition evident in especially quantitative research regarding the language and criteria used (Farquhar 2012; Gibbs, 2007; Given, 2008). Trustworthiness rather than validity of the study is in the center of evaluation (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Given, 2008).

To evaluate the trustworthiness of qualitative research, dependability, authenticity and reflexivity are often cited as central criteria (Gibbs, 2007; Given, 2008; Eriksson &

Kovalainen, 2008; Lincoln & Cuba, 1985). The first criterion, dependability, refers to following a systematic, logical and traceable process (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Given, 2008) as well as presenting possible changes in the research design throughout the execution of the research (Farquhar, 2012). In this report, I have provided a detailed description of the research design and process, and argued for the practices adopted. Moreover, I have openly described the changes made to original research plan while insights emerged during the research process.

The second and the third criterion, authenticity and reflexivity, are linked to each other. Authenticity can be described as "reflexive consciousness about one's own perspective and appreciation for the perspectives of others" (Given, 2008, p. 302). I have respected this criterion by separating the researcher's work and thoughts from the work of other authors, as well as respecting the views of the interviewees by presenting them as accurately as possible. Reflexivity, on the other hand, entails being transparent about the researcher's own presumptions, their interaction between the researcher and respondents, the development of their understanding and underlying philosophical stance. It also entails acknowledging the researcher's influence in the process as an actor rather than an objective observer (Gibbs, 2007). Throughout the methodological discussion I have made my assumptions and their development explicit, I've discussed how my background might affect the study and brought forth my epistemological views affecting the research approach and analysis.

Related to authenticity and reflexivity is also the goal to examine and report multiple perspectives, which is rooted in the subjectivist worldview of multiple possible realities (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Given, 2008). Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) cite the completeness of a case as central criteria for good quality case study. This means paying attention to the specific setting and context of the case and investigating evidence exhaustively, considering also data that contradicts conclusions (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). I have taken this criterion into account by deploying comparative analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) through my data analysis to ensure the consistency of the coding as well as to increase the quality of my findings. Additionally, I offer a relatively broad description of the case context in part 4.1 analyzing the technological, ideological and political context of this study.

In addition, Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) argue that a case study should be significant and issues in the center of the research should be interesting and relevant either from a theoretical or practical perspective. In this case, the case organization provides an unique opportunity to examine a contemporary social movement in the context of a nascent, fast-developing technology that might disrupt entire industries and transform fundamental processes of the society and economy such as record keeping, voting, financial services and property management (Swan, 2015). Moreover, the case offers a possibility to examine novel research streams concerning social movements as spaces, meeting organizing as well as pluralism in organizing.

Finally, Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) argue that reflecting the ethical implications of the research process can be regarded as an indicator of a good research conduct. In the next section I will end this methodological part by discussing the role of ethics in this study.

3.5.2 Ethical considerations

Ethical issues were explicitly considered in every step of the research process. Firstly, the research topic was chosen so that it should cause no harm to respondents. Secondly, the research methods and the application of these methods were conducted respecting the rights of the respondents. This included obtaining an informed consent and making the participation explicitly voluntary. It also entailed ensuring the privacy of the informants by removing the names of people, places and companies, and other information that would clearly reveal the identity of the interviewee. Complete anonymity was not guaranteed, but direct identification of informants was made relatively difficult. Additionally, the data confidentiality was ensured by storing it safely in a location only the researcher could access. After completing the study, the informants were sent a summary of the research findings, thanking for their valuable contribution in the case and demonstrating what their input was used for.

In this part I have presented the research approach and design in detail, arguing for the choices made throughout the process. Moreover, I have explicitly discussed my assumptions and their development into final conclusions. In addition, I have addressed the role of ethics in the research process. The next chapter of this study will present and discuss the results of this study while returning to the more conventional style of reporting.

4 FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of this study in three main sections. First, the case and its context are presented in section 4.1, which assists in understanding the case as a part of a wider context and contributes to a holistic and contextualized description of the case. Secondly, section 4.2 presents the empirical findings derived from the interviews and meetup.com. The data is analyzed utilizing the model of Haug (2013) presented in section 2.4. The findings are divided into subsections discussing meetings from the perspective of organization, network and institution. In addition, the last subsection investigates the meaning of the studied meeting arena by comparing it to other arenas in the field. Finally, this chapter closes by discussing the findings in the light of existing theory in section 4.3.

4.1 Presenting the case: Ethereum Helsinki Meetup

The focus of this case study was a ‘meetup’ group Ethereum Helsinki Meetup. Founded in January 2016, the Ethereum Helsinki Meetup is a group facilitated through the Meetup.com online platform that allows users to set up groups according to their shared interests and organize meetings for group members. In addition, the platform allows users to invite people in the group, have discussions with groups or individual members as well as to leave ratings about the group or meetings. Joining the group and the meetings is voluntary, free and open to everyone but requires a registration to the Meetup platform. The meetups take place once a month, every second Wednesday evening of the month. Location of the meetings varies, being however usually a restaurant/café or a free meeting space in Helsinki.

The case material consists of interviews with the meetup participants complemented by member data (such as number of sign ups and online discussions) available through the meetup.com online group (www.meetup.com/Helsinki-Ethereum-Meetup). The data was gathered during winter and spring 2016–2017, when the group had been holding meetings for about a year and had grown from 21 members (1st meetup, Jan 2016, Appendix III) to total of 173 members by April 2017 (16th meetup, Appendix III). In that period, meetups usually attracted around 10–25 participants. The participant number was higher (24–33 participants) in the meetings that involved a company visit, which the group organized three times with different financial institutions and a technology company during 2016.

However, the context of this case is central in understanding its meaning in a wider context. Presenting and outlining the context of this study has three purposes. Firstly, it helps to understand the motivations, goals and actions of the participants of the Ethereum Helsinki meetup. Secondly, it positions the group in a wider economic, societal and ideological context, and thirdly, it ties the case to a certain time and space, highlighting its unique features. Thus, presenting the context aims at giving a more complete description of the case.

The first subsection discusses the main theme of the meetings, Ethereum, as a technology and an investment. The second subsection goes deeper by discussing some of the ideologies connected to Ethereum as well as the current political climate regarding the regulation of blockchain technology.

4.1.1 Technological and business context

The combination of technological and business opportunities has made Ethereum an interesting topic for a variety of actors from coders to investors. The case meetup group brings together a varied group of people interested in Ethereum, which is the main topic of the group. The organizer defines he topic more specifically as: "Discuss, hear and learn about & how to, why and when Ethereum & Smart contracts, DAO etc. Vision, reality, applications. How to's, p2p learning, workshops.. (sic)" (Helsinki Ethereum Meetup, 2017). What is then Ethereum, smart contracts and DAO?

Ethereum is an open software platform based on a public blockchain ledger (Vigna, 2016B). Compared to the perhaps most famous application of blockchain technology, bitcoin, Ethereum's purpose and operational capabilities extend further (Rosic, 2016). Bitcoin was created to enable a peer-to-peer (p2p) digital currency system using blockchain to track the ownership of the digital currency (Nakamoto, 2008). The core innovation of Ethereum, on the other hand, is the Ethereum Virtual Machine that enables developers to create and run decentralized applications on the platform regardless of the programming language (Patron, 2016). This opens up new possibilities to deploy blockchain applications more efficiently (Patron, 2016).

The Ethereum platform is fueled by 'ether' that are crypto tokens or "unique piece of code that can be used to pay for the computational resources needed to run an application or program" (Hertig, n.d.). Like bitcoin, ethers are digital asset bearers, which can be traded much like currency (Rosic, 2016). To give some perspective, the ether market cap is $21.8B (1 ether = $233,75) and that of bitcoin's $38,7B (1 bitcoin = $2349,45) the two forming by far the most valued digital currencies currently on the market (Cryptocurrency market capitalizations, 19.07.2017). While the technological purpose of ether is to fuel the applications and interactions in the Ethereum network, it has also emerged as a debated investment instrument, the valuation of which reflects the opinions about the future of the technology (Vigna, 2016B). Ethereum is cheaper than bitcoin due to less electricity needed to create one ether, and developers as well as enterprise executives are rooting for Ethereum over bitcoin as the most promising blockchain technology (Chaparro, 2017; Sunnarborg, 2017).

Another ability that has evoked the interest and enthusiasm of developers and commercial actors alike is the ability to run so-called smart contracts in the Ethereum network (Vigna, 2016B). Smart contracts are simply contracts presented in code, actualizing and enforcing themselves without third parties when the terms of the contract are met (Lauslahti et al., 2016).

As smart contracts do not require manual intervention, paperwork or an intermediary, they enable automatisation, help fight fraud and eliminate human mistakes and reduce processing times and transaction costs (Tormer, 2016). Smart contracts can also be used to build Decentralized Autonomous Organizations (DAO), which are a collection of smart contracts, run by programming code written on the Ethereum blockchain. The ownership of a DAO is distributed and decentralized so that purchased tokens give people voting rights instead of equity like in traditional organizations (del Castillo, 2016).

There has been a rapid emergence of alliances and joint ventures between large enterprises, researchers and startups focused on developing business-ready applications based on Ethereum. Most of them rely on a so-called permissioned blockchain, which means only authorized parties are allowed in the network. Such projects include the Hyperledger project hosted by Linux Foundation, the global banking consortium R3, and most recently Enterprise Ethereum Alliance that brings together technology giants like Microsoft and Cisco, startups, researchers and banks to create open-source standard for the industry (Hackett, 2017).

Despite the recent surge in interest towards Ethereum, it is still a very novel technology in its early development phases. Whereas the foundation for bitcoin and further blockchain applications was laid out in 2008 (Nakamoto, 2008), Ethereum was first developed in 2014 (Hajdarbegovic, 2014). Although experiments in different industries from supply chain (Popper & Lohr, 2017) and financial services to marketing (Patel, 2017) are made, the actual use cases for Ethereum and their competitiveness against existing and competing solutions is still to be seen. As one of the blockchain experts interviewed put it: ”I’m not 100% sure if this [Ethereum] is the way to do things but I’m 100% sure that this includes things that will be a part of our future”. Ethereum seems to hold great promise but to what extent the promise is realized, and when, is still uncertain.

4.1.2 Ideological and political context

In addition to the technical aspects and possible luring business opportunities, there is another discussion worth noting around blockchain and its applications: the possibility to use blockchain as a tool to bring about change in the current economic and societal systems. Moreover, the possible implications to regulation have caught the attention of national governments as well as international regulatory institutions such as the European Parliament. The beginning of this subsection presents some of the ideologies connected to Ethereum and other blockchain technologies while the end of this subsection shortly addresses the current political environment for blockchain technologies.

Idealism is embedded in the very way Ethereum is organized. It is open-source, meaning that anyone can view and suggest changes to its source code (Vigna, 2016A). Ethereum is owned by no single entity and participation in the development work is public (Patron, 2016). Additionally, transactions running in the Ethereum network do not need a third party authorization nor can be altered by a third party (Vigna, 2016B). These are not just technical features but design decisions representing the values of freedom, openness, transparency and accountability connected to open source movement (Coleman, 2013).

What is central in the way Ethereum is configured is the idea of a world computer. The Ethereum Virtual machine (EVM) is Turing complete, which roughly means that the system is capable of performing any task that can be expressed as a computational function regardless of the coding language (Patron, 2016). In addition, the EVM is run by all participants in the peer-to-peer network, making it decentralized. Combining these two features results in a peer-to-peer, general-purpose global computer that is running without third party interference (Patron, 2016) such as a state or board of directors. This also means that it is possible to program an autonomously running 'machine' that can only be stopped by destroying all the computer, or nodes, in the network (Seeger, 2016).

Taking one step further, this could also mean decentralizing the way applications are currently offered and run (Patron, 2016). Anyone could offer his or her services on top of the Ethereum infrastructure without any third party such as Apple controlling which applications are published (Hertig, n.d.). From an ideological point of view, this would, at extreme, mean eliminating the reliance on companies or other third parties to provide the network and applications, and give individuals the control and ownership of their data (Hertig, n.d.).

However, collective ownership and demolishing state interference are no new ideas. Socialism in its many forms focuses on public ownership (Huckle & White, 2016). Anarchism goes a step further by rejecting the concept of any central external authority as well as hierarchies imposed by established institutions while demanding property should be not only public but also controlled by the local community (Ward, 2004). Libertarianism shares the anarchist mistrust to central authorities and focuses on the protection of individual freedom and rights (Huckle & White, 2016). How these ideologies relate to blockchain is that the technology can be seen as a possible tool for organizing the economy and state according to Libertarian or Socialist principles (Huckle & White, 2016). From a Libertarian point of view, the blockchain technology and bitcoins provide an alternative to a state-issued and -controlled monetary system demolishing the premise that an individual should trust the state and central banks to retain the value of their money (Huckle & White, 2016). From a socialist (Marxist) point of view, bitcoins could for example replace currencies by using the energy needed to produce one bitcoin as a unit of value (Huckle & White, 2016). From a more moderate perspective, the consensus-driven model underlying Bitcoin blockchain can also be seen as a way to actualize democratic, censorship-resistant organizations (Swan, 2015).

Besides individuals, governmental agencies have also started to think what blockchain technologies, virtual currencies and smart contracts could mean for them from a regulatory perspective. The problem is the novelty of the technology and ambiguity of the exact use cases (Jones, 2016). There is great uncertainty about what the regulatory environment for virtual currencies, smart contracts and other blockchain applications will look like in few years.

While blockchain activists and anarchists would prefer code to be interpreted as law (Boucher et al., 2017) it is most likely that code-based smart contracts will continue to be interpreted within the existing legal framework in the near future (Boucher et al., 2017), limiting the possibilities of smart contracts and decentralized organizations built on them. The Research Institute of the Finnish Economy (ETLA) concludes somewhat optimistically that it is possible that smart contracts create “legally binding rights and obligations to their parties” at least in some cases (Lauslahti et al., 2016, p. 2).

The European Parliament has so far taken a “precautionary monitoring” approach to blockchain (Jones, 2016) and seems to continue on that path, putting the value of possible innovations first (Acheson, 2017). However, the threat of terrorism around Europe and efforts to control money laundering have increased regulators’ pressure to regulate cryptocurrencies and to identify its users (Scott, 2016). Even within the European Union, individual states have not yet come to an unified approach so national differences will likely remain (Scott, 2016), making it legally challenging for businesses to benefit from the possible network effect of the distributed ledger technology.

To summarize this section, Ethereum is a technology that has evoked the interest of many parties. Some see Ethereum as a tool for social change towards a decentralized, transparent and consensus-driven governing, others see a lucrative business opportunity. Regulators, entrepreneurs, coders and enterprises alike are interested in the promises Ethereum may hold. However, uncertainty of the regulation, relative immaturity of the technology and ambiguity of the use cases are holding back investments in the technology.

Moving on from the context of the case, the following section analyzes the case based on the collected empirical data utilizing Haug’s (2013) triangular framework of the configuration of a meeting arena.

4.2 Empirical findings

This section presents the empirical findings of this study in five subsections. The analysis as well as the structure of this section are based on the triangular framework by Haug (2013) examining meetings from three perspectives: a decision-based organization (4.2.1), a network hub (4.2.2), and an institutionalized routine (4.2.3). In subsection 4.2.4 the analysis extends to investigate the meaning and position of the case meeting arena in relation to other arenas in the field. Finally, this section closes by linking the presented perspectives together (4.2.5) before delving into a theoretical discussion of the findings (4.3).

Each of the following four subsections first shortly introduces the perspective as used in the original framework (Haug, 2013) proceeding then to discuss the case in the light of the empirical data and the theory framework.

4.2.1 Meeting as a decision-based organization

Decisions can be seen as the most fundamental aspect of organization (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011; Haug, 2013). A 'full' organization has five elements: membership, hierarchy, rules, monitoring and sanctions. However, many spaces that exist between formal organizations, such as social movements, can be better characterized as partial organizations with some but less than all five organizational elements (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011). Organization can be regarded as a formalized plan (Haug, 2013) that is based on decisions as statements about conscious choices regarding people's behavior (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011).

Four of the five organizational elements were found in the Ethereum Helsinki Meetup. Firstly, membership was decided to be free and open for everyone without restrictions or requirements: "We see it so that new people come and should come" (Founder & Organizer), and: "Everyone has the right to come and one doesn't even have to have a keen interest in the topic", (Senior participant 1). Social movements tend to aim at maximizing participation (Haug, 2013), so this finding was rather predictable.

What on the other hand seemed to be an extraordinary feature of the group to the participants was the coexistence and cooperation of both technical, ideological and commercial side. According to the interviewees, the technical or ideological aspects were nothing they had not expected: "That we nerds are actually the minority, that was really surprising!" (Senior participant 1). On the other hand, the fact that companies were allowed to the meetings as hosts or presenters was referred by some interviewees as exceptional: "I haven't really seen anything like that before, that companies would come to present to us developers" (Senior participant 1), and by some necessary: "I think that everyone has to admit that both sides [business and technical] are needed, it's a bit like Ying and Yang, they are intertwined" (Founder & Organizer). From the perspective of an organization, such diversity can be seen intentional and organized: the group had specifically decided to include a variety of actors.

The second organizational element visible was hierarchy. Authority presented itself in the both formal and informal role of the organizer, which was shared by the two founders of the group. Formally, the organizer was a specified person administrating the group on meetup.com. They had the ability to send messages to all participants, modify the group's settings (such as page layout) and create new events for the group. Thus, the organizer's role included power to decide the location and timing of the events: "We give the time and place, and people show up", described one of the two organizers, simultaneously making distinction between the role of participants and that of organizers. More informally, authority presented itself in the practice of keeping presentations in the group and determining the overall topic of the meeting. The organizer could ask from certain participants if they would like to present their work or ideas, calling out specific individuals or companies.

However, the authority and role of the organizer were contested by two interviewees. They suggested that the group was organized by "a diverse group of people" or "we" rather than one or two specific persons. This can also be interpreted as a signal of low hierarchy and egalitarian meeting style. Even though only two persons had decision-based authority, some felt included as active organizers. And indeed, Haug (2013) notes that the meeting arena is not a static structure but every meeting is also influenced and recreated by its participants.

The third element visible in the Ethereum Helsinki Meetup was rules. The organizers made the decision to organize the meetings once a month, every second Wednesday, and defined the purpose of the meetings:

> We decided that this kind of monthly meetup is not too heavy a burden for us organizers but gives a repetitive structure where knowledge and experiences can be shared more widely than if we just would send emails to one another. (Organizer & Founder).

Fourthly, the group and its meetings included monitoring. Rather than monitoring whether certain tasks have been filled or if any set targets were met, monitoring in this group was more closely related to the purpose of the meetings, which was to evaluate the progress made in the technological, legal and business side of Ethereum: "Everyone tells what they are working on and what they would like to do" (Regular participant 1). In one way, monitoring was even linked to the reason to participate in the group: to hear about the current projects and progress made.

Although not directly recognized by the interviewees, the group at meetup.com also functions as a site for monitoring: participants can post material there or request presentations held in the meeting or other material mentioned to be shared in the online group for those that were not in the meeting. Thus, giving the opportunity to monitor what was discussed in the meeting.

The fifth organizational element, sanctions, or its positive counterpart incentives, was not clearly identifiable. The existence of sanctions or incentives would imply that there would need to be a decision about what type of behavior would lead to either a punishment or a reward. Essentially, there would also need to be a decision of how punishments or rewards would be enforced. The data did not imply that such decision would have been taken, regarding for example the exclusion of a member due to inappropriate behavior. A possible explanation for this is that sanctions or incentives have not been needed so far to guide behavior. It is possible that the participants for example share a personal bond, which they respect (and thus rely on the network of personal ties) or share norms that they all respect without an explicit agreement (relying on institutional logic). In addition, enforcing sanctions could affect strongly the internal dynamics of the meetings and especially the role of the organizer if he or she would be decided to have the power to enforce sanctions. Giving one or few members the power to punish or reward would imply a deeper and possibly more problematic hierarchy than the decision to set the time and place for meetings. It would alter the power relations in the group in a way that might not be welcomed by all participants, and contradict the principle of open participation.

Although the organizers could ask some of the participants to present, there was no evidence that this would have been a reward or recognition. Rather, the aim seemed to be to encourage participants in general to produce content, and through that ensure that the content of the meetings would interest its participants: "At the moment the goal is to make the group self-sufficient so that we original organizers would have to do as little as possible – and that people would like it" (Organizer & Founder).

Thus, from the five organizational elements four were identified: decision about membership, authority, rules and monitoring. None of these decisions were officially written down, except for the formal organizer visible in meetup.com page as the convener, but stories told by the organizer and other participants were considered as evidence for these decisions. Based on this, the Ethereum Helsinki Meetup can be considered as partial organization having some but not all organizational elements of a complete organization.

However, organizing meetings entails more than just formal decisions. The next subsection analyzes the case as a meeting arena from the perspective of a network.

4.2.2 Meeting as a network hub

Meetings can also be regarded from the perspective of a network when the "meeting appears as an event where personal ties are created and fostered, similar to a hub in computer technology" (Haug, 2013, p. 718). From this perspective, the purpose of the meeting becomes facilitating communication and free association of participants. Moreover, network is based on friendship, as all participants of the network are friends or friends of another participant (Haug, 2013). According to Haug (2013) this means common norms or a plan are not needed as “participants are mobilized through their friends and by their individual goals” (p. 718). The order based on a network is emergent, in comparison to a decided order of an organization (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011). Several characteristics of a network were visible in the data.

First of all, participants defined the meetup and its purpose with similar terms such as “a meeting place”, “community”, and a “place for sharing and learning”. It was described as a place where contacts are born, knowledge is shared and cooperation starts: “I can learn new things, get contacts to people who are interested in the same topics. Also there is the opportunity to cooperate with these people” (Regular visitor 1). The possibility to freely associate with other participants was also appreciated: ”So that you can just go and freely talk to people. That’s important” (Senior participant 1). Creating a network was also defined as one of the goals of the founders:” So that people would get to know what everyone is working on in this area, and who is who. Creating connections between people” (Organizer & Founder).

Additionally, network perspective was prominent in the recruitment of new participants. The group initially started from the organizer’s own network as they began promoting the meeting to their personal and professional contacts:

> Especially in the beginning it was like… Through our day job we started talking to people that we have this kind of group, come to this place this time. So we started the snowball from our own contacts. Especially the first times we knew all participants personally. (Organizer & Founder).

Personal and virtual networks were also what brought interviewees to the group. Three out of seven interviewed participants knew other participants in the meeting from before and received an invitation from a friend or an acquaintance. Two found the meetup group on social media (LinkedIn) through a post from a contact. Last two found the group through the website platform meetup.com by looking for groups matching their interests and existing group memberships. Half of the interviewees also mentioned they had invited one or several people from their own network to join the meetings. Hence, the birth and growth of the group was based on the networks and personal relationships of the participants.

What Haug (2013) theorized about the need for a plan or goal for a meeting was also remarkable. Namely, when asked how respondents chose which meeting to attend, the topic or agenda was irrelevant for all but one of the respondents to decide whether they would like to participate. The interviewees described their thoughts: “The agenda doesn’t always tell what is going to happen… You just have to go there and see” (Newcomer 2), and: “Even though Ethereum would not be the number one priority as a topic, the people who go to these meetings on the other hand are very interesting to network with” (Newcomer 1). Consequently, the possibility to freely associate with other participants was more central than a formal agenda or meeting-specific topic.

Indeed, as theorized by Haug (2013), participants seemed to be mobilized by their friends and individual goals. The reasons interviewees gave for their participation and interest in the meetings fell into four main categories: connecting, developing, learning, and doing business.

Firstly, the category ‘connecting’ included motivations to help, to meet others interested in and working with same topic, possibility to cooperate with other members, and seeking support. The second category, developing, included desire to share one’s knowledge for the use of others and to contribute to the development of the technology. The third category, learning, included understanding the technology and its use cases, finding out about current status and local projects, learning new and sheer curiosity. The fourth category included a variety of motivations driven by business interest, such as seeking information about the technology to develop a current or future product, assessing market opportunities and competitors as well as seeking business partners and support with business development.

This brings us to a point about diversity. Haug (2013) theorizes that: “Not sameness, but difference, is the resource of the meeting, because difference provides opportunities for learning and sharing a variety of experiences“ (p. 718). This was exactly how all the interviewees described the meetups:

> That is the strength that interested people and experts from different fields gather together. Because if there would be only IT people I think that the result would be quite… different. Or if there would be only investors or researchers... It’s really more of an advantage that there are people from every field. (Senior participant 2).

Related to the nature of the meetings, the fact that the meeting took place physically as a face-to-face interaction situation was regarded essential by participants:

> That we give our attention to someone presenting, and follow… That is the only way to really deepen understanding about the topic and have more meaningful interaction. (Newcomer 3).

And:

> Even though this is virtual in every way… Software is always abstract and what have been built on top of that is even more abstract and not anywhere yet. So even though all this is so abstract, networking takes places in social interaction, face-to-face. That is a quite beautiful feature in us humans; we still need the social interaction. (Regular participant 2).

Meeting face-to-face was also regarded as enabling trust building: ”It’s somehow easier to say face-to-face something confidential because there will be no record left” (Regular participant 1). Trust was visible in exceptionally open sharing in the meetings:

> There are competitors but they are more united by the topic than separated by those company boundaries (…) the discussion there is extremely open. Across organizational boundaries, even competitors. (Newcomer 2).

However, although Haug (2013) claims trust exists because participants all know each other through first or second-order friends, this was not completely true in this case:

It’s voluntary activity and it’s not so common at least in Finland that people gather with people they don’t know and talk about a certain topic. And that they are ready to tell to complete strangers their own experiences without necessarily getting any benefit out of it themselves… I find that kind of unique. (Regular participant).

Thus, trust was not necessarily based on bonds between the participants but on something in the group as a situation: ”The atmosphere there is intimate… Really fruitful”, (Senior participant 2). Several participants described the group having a friendly and confidential atmosphere, which made them feel encouraged: “The atmosphere is really good! No negativity or talking down other’s ideas but everyone has been extremely positive and encouraging” (Senior participant 1).

The sense of trust can also be partly explained by the size of the group. Most meetings are relativity small with around 10–15 participants (Appendix III), and the seating in the meeting is often organized around one table if the location allows. The meeting is also relatively free in form with usually no clear leader: ”Round table style”, one interviewee described (Newcomer 1). While this can also be interpreted as an institutionalized form of organizing, having low or non-existent hierarchies are also typical for network form of organization. Another interviewee added: ”I find that small groups are good for receiving and giving help as everyone’s skills and expertise are known so you know who to ask” (Regular participant 2). Hence, the setting itself might encourage trust by allowing participants to get to know each other through spatial proximity.

However, from the perspective of establishing trust, it is also interesting to note that the participants of the meetings changed frequently: ”About a half are usually so-called core-group/regulars and half are newcomers” (Organizer & Founder). This means that trust would have to be established and negotiated in every meeting to establish trust between the existing and the new members.

One ritual aiming to enhance the trust of newcomers and to unite the meeting participants was a simple welcoming ritual done by the main organizer: ”Founder 2 always welcomes [new participants]… And through that tries to make people feel like they are part of the community” (Organizer & Founder).

Another way to generate trust was asking in the beginning of the meetings about the interests of new participants. According to my own observation, the meeting ritual also included an introduction round in the beginning including people’s names, professions and possibly their reason for participating in the meeting (e.g., ”I’m here because I’m interested in…”). Such sharing of interests can according to Haug (2013) generate trust by making overlapping interests transparent. The aim is not necessarily to find a topic that all participants of the meeting would be interested in but to identify possible clusters of like-minded participants (Haug, 2013). The organizer described it:

> In the first time we contact [the newcomers] and ask why they are coming. Then we know a bit about what each one is working on and if the new person has a specific interest then we can maybe try to create contacts between people… So that could maybe develop into something. (Organizer & Founder).

Haug (2013) theorizes that the next step of these interest clusters would be affinity groups. Indeed, three of the seven participants interviewed (excluding the current organizer) had thought about starting their own meetup. However, the link between such motivation and a cluster found in this meetup group remained unclear. However, it can be argued that the Ethereum Helsinki Meetup itself seemed like an affinity group under blockchain and Bitcoin related meetups, being a more specific topic under a larger technological umbrella, which subsection 4.2.4 addresses.

In addition to making overlapping interests apparent, Haug (2013) claims that sharing experiences is another way to generate trust in meetings. As mentioned earlier in this section, sharing experiences in the group was very open. However, this can be seen not only as the enabler of trust but also the result of it. In order for people to feel comfortable enough to share their experiences and interests, some level of trust has to exist (e.g., they have to believe what they say will be considered in good faith and not used against them, which would imply a shared norm or value). Sharing can then enforce the established trust.

From the network perspective, the meetings can also be ends in themselves as ”sites for mutual learning and storytelling” (Haug, 2013, p. 718). This perspective was also present in the informants’ stories and was coded initially as ‘sense making and learning’, which had three levels: an activity, motivation to participate and a result of the interaction in the meeting.

Firstly, there were different types of activities that aimed at learning or deepening understanding of a specific topic. This included for example listening to understand, preparing presentations and collective informal sense making of the meaning and consequences of the technology through discussion. The group was also seen as a tool to test one’s thoughts to validate or challenge ideas and perceptions; hence it was used as a sort of testing laboratory. Additionally, the group offered a site to discover what others found interesting or important, and thus making sense of what is relevant and what is not: ”People seem to present these things more concretely there and you kind of understand through others which things are important and which are not” (Regular participant 1).

Secondly, as mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, learning was also one of the motivations to attend the meeting: ”There is always something new to learn” three participants described their interest towards the group.

Thirdly, learning and sense making were also the result of participation. For example, one participant was better able to assess their current knowledge: “Through attending I understood that I need to learn more” (Newcomer 2). For another participant the meeting helped to test their assumptions and learn about the current market situation: “Confirmed my thoughts that the legal side is still too risky” (Newcomer 1).

Seen from the perspective of a network, meeting is a place for establishing trust and not for making collective decisions (as in meeting as organization) (Haug, 2013). However, by only having a network the problem becomes differentiating a meeting from a mere discussion group or a place for friends to chat. Even though social interaction is a central part of the meetup, it is only a part of it: ”It would be good that the group would also get something done” (Senior participant 1).

Haug (2013) theorizes that establishing a collective identity is essential for a network to develop into an organization. The problem with establishing a collective identity is that it “requires that the actors in the network not only know and trust their respective neighbors, but all or most other actors in the network too” (Haug, 2013, p. 719). As the members of the meetings are diverse with a variety of goals and interests and change frequently, establishing trust among all participants of the network becomes challenging.

If establishing a collective entity is not feasible, what role do routines, rituals and norms play in establishing ground for cooperation?

4.2.3 Meeting as an institutionalized routine

Meetings can also be regarded from the perspective of an institution, norms and taken-for-granted practices. From this perspective a meeting becomes a site for affirming and actualizing norms through routines and rituals. In contrast to an organization, decisions about the meeting do not need to be made as possible disagreements are expected to be resolved ‘naturally’. Participants believe that they share a latent agreement of how the meeting is supposed to go, thus both the meeting itself and the way it is held can be taken for granted (Haug, 2013).

Seven out of eight interviewees had visited also other technology-focused meetups. Thus, it is possible that they had an existing perception of the concept of a meetup, ‘what typically happens in a meetup’, through visiting other meetups. In this case other groups could be the foundation of the latent agreement. “Nowadays around all new ideas can be set up a meetup and then everyone comes there to discuss freely”, described one regular meetup-attendant the concept of a ‘meetup’ (Newcomer 3).

The organization platform itself, meetup.com, gives also a certain standardized format for participants and organizers. Firstly, it allows transparency through showing a list of attendees to upcoming and past meetings as well as displays public reviews and comments left to the group. Secondly, it implies that participants should register and sign up to meetings prior participating. However, this was a norm and not a rule – participation and sign ups were not controlled. Thirdly, the site allows setting up upcoming meetings for months in advance, giving it a sense of continuity. There is also an implicit agreement that all information about meetings is announced on this site. Fourthly, the site implies openness: everyone can see the dates of the meetings and join the group. In a sum, both the type of the meetings as ‘meetups’ as well as the way they are communicated about and organized can become institutionalized.

In the interviewees’ descriptions of their participation, there was a taken-for-granted element regarding the continuity of the meetings and their own participation. Participation was regarded as routine: ”I keep it marked in my calendar” (Senior participant 2), and taken for granted: “I always go if I can” (Regular participant 1). This includes also the assumption that the meetup group will continue to convene in the future, thus, the group itself can become institutionalized to at least some degree.

The meetings themselves also had some taken-for-granted routines. The typical flow of the meeting can be regarded as one: “Typically it’s like, we have one or two presentations and after that we discuss” (Organizer & Founder). The practice of keeping presentations and discussing about them came across as a natural, or even necessary practice to organize the meeting: ”Especially in the first times I had to prepare presentations myself” (Organizer & Founder). Discussion was another prominent repetitive activity: “We listen to each others’ things and discuss about multiple topics” (Senior participant 2). Additionally, the meetings had two rituals mentioned in the previous section: welcoming new participants and introducing participants.

Haug (2013) theorizes that besides organizational decisions regarding key elements of an organization, much of organizing is left to “cultural practice” that he calls ‘meeting style’ (p. 717). For example, the degree to which the meeting arena is organized is mostly a matter of style.

The meeting style of Ethereum Helsinki Meetup can be characterized as open, informal and egalitarian. Firstly, not only is the participation to the meetings open but the exact agenda and structure of the meetings are also left to be resolved as the meeting emerges. Secondly, formalities are kept to the minimum: no sign up sheets or participant lists are used. Thirdly, in principle, all members are free to present and have an equal opportunity to speak. According to my own observation, nobody was giving turns in speaking but participants seemed to naturally take and give time for speaking. “I haven’t noticed that anyone would be controlling the meeting”, confirmed an interviewee (Newcomer 1). Remarkable is also that not all interviewees were able to name or recognize the organizer, which implies that the leadership in this group is rather decentralized and no strong leader exists.

The specific way the meeting is organized can also be based on values, norms or ideologies (Haug, 2013). Interviewees described the meetings typically as “open”, and some highlighted freedom: “The freedom is the thing. Everyone is allowed to come. You can do whatever you want and you do not have to do anything if you don’t want to”, (Senior participant 1). Having low bureaucracy, informal structures, open participation and practice of sitting around one table can be regarded as egalitarian ideals. However, whether this was more of a result of organizer’s previous experiences of how a typical meetup should be like, and thus reproducing a field-level institutional logic (Thonrton & Ocasio, 1999), or then an ideology-based choice, is unclear. What can be said is that the participants found the model “very fruitful” (Senior participant 2) and overall good. This would imply that at least those participants that have already attended few meetings share some institutionalized norms. It is also possible that those who do not share the norms of the group naturally leave or stop participating.

However, the institutional logic based on the assumption of a shared agreement is challenged by the diversity of participants (Haug, 2013). Institution relies on participants' perception of unity and feeling of community. When around half of the participants change every time, holding such an image over time becomes unlikely. Moreover, several interviewees described the meeting as a group of individuals with their personal motivations and goals. This creates tension between the individual participants and the perception of unified community. The question then becomes, what unites the Ethereum Helsinki group and what keeps it together?

The meetings seemed to be places for individuals rather than a meeting of a specific group. There were no signs of the group itself having a grand vision of bringing about a specific change in the society. This kind of visions did exist in the group, but as individual aspirations rather than a vision most or all members would support. Furthermore, the interviewees did not perceive a collective identity that all participants would share: "At the moment it feels like there is no such a shared thing. It's more like everyone talks about their own things and what they are doing" (Senior participant 1). Instead, clusters of interests emerged as some were interested in seeking business opportunities, some in contributing to the development of the technology and some seeking knowledge about the technology for their own purposes.

Only one thing seemed to unite the group: belief that blockchain or Ethereum will be a technology with a significant impact: "There is like-mindedness in the sense that… The thought that this will be a big thing" (Newcomer 2). Enthusiasm towards the technology was also shared: "It's great how everyone is interested in the topic and what is going to happen" (Senior participant 2). Many participants granted that there are indeed shared interests between the participants, and some felt it was even the reason the group existed, why people joined the group and believed that this made the group function well:

> When people are interested in the same things, the cooperation is then already easy – That's just how it is, the shared interest is what draws people in, and then what others have done is the interesting thing then. (Senior participant 1).

Shared interest into the topic of the meeting can well function as the basis for common ground for a diverse participant group. However, interest in the topic alone is not enough to form an organization. Shared interest might be a foundation that can develop into a collective identity or deeper sense of community but in order to the meetings to run, participants have to accept and respect the organizational decisions made regarding organizational elements (membership, hierarchy, rules, monitoring, sanctions). Thus, the central binding factor appears to be a shared organizational goal, which can be regarded as creating space for the diverse group of factors to freely meet, discuss and network.

Before moving into a more in-depth discussion of the theoretical implications of the findings, there is one more aspect to cover: the position of Ethereum Helsinki Meetup in relation to other meeting arenas or meetups in the field and the immediate context of the group in the light of empirical case data.

4.2.4 Position of the meeting arena and its relations to other arenas

To understand the meaning of a specific meeting arena, it is necessary to look at its position in the wider network of meeting arenas and its relationship to them (Haug, 2013). How the arena is positioned in relation to other arenas not only helps individual participants to make sense of the discussions but also sheds light on inter-organizational relations and influence. In the case of Ethereum Helsinki Meetup, the wider field includes decentralized (blockhain) technologies and virtual currencies such as bitcoin.

Ethereum Helsinki Meetup is a local example of a global phenomenon. Alone on meetup.com there are 1012 meetups worldwide that have marked Ethereum as (one of) their topic(s), and 1346 meetups have marked blockchain as their topic while the most well-known cryptocurrency bitcoin has 1700 meetup groups (meetup.com, 20.07.2017). Just within one work week you can find Ethereum, blockchain and bitcoin meetups organized practically around the world from Argentina to Sweden. In addition to meetup.com, other popular sites for communicating about meetups include Eventbrite and Facebook. Competition for participants seems to be tough, and many events advertise in their title free beer and/or pizza, or even a pool party.

There is also a specific genre of Ethereum meetups, which are named according to the same template: <city name> Ethereum Meetup, such as Manila Ethereum Meetup or Minnesota Ethereum Meetup. Most of these meetups also carry similar visual and verbal cues by placing the logo of Ethereum as their cover photo and possibly calling participants “Etherians” instead of “members”. Such logic was also used in the #Occupy movement that saw meetings under #Occupy <city name> (Gleason, 2013). Such naming can be a defining symbol that evokes expectations regarding the style and form of the meeting (Haug, 2013). As previously discussed, one interviewee referred to ’meetups’ as places and gatherings for free discussion around a novel topic, indicating that the word meetup serves as a signal of an institutionalized category.

Compared to the masses of blockchain and bitcoin related meetups advertising themselves with free refreshments or other entertainment, the Ethereum Helsinki Meetup is in the more issue-based end of the continuum. Participants themselves saw this arena as more ”theoretical” (Senior participant 2) and ”focused” (New comer 3) in comparison to other blockchain or bitcoin related meetups they had visited.

Indeed, in meetings the position of the group in the wider network becomes negotiated (Haug, 2013): how is this meetup different or similar in relation to other meetups on the same topic? On the most obvious level, the Ethereum Helsinki Meetup stands out from other groups as the only Ethereum-focused meetup group in Finland (at least according to the knowledge of interviewees and the researcher). This can be considered quite natural taking into account the novelty of the technology and the relatively small population of Finland. However, interviewees made also more subtle distinctions about the meetup group’s relation to other similar groups.

Firstly, the participant group was considered more diverse than in other technology meetups. This can be related to the novelty of the topic, which means there are not many experts and the specific use cases and standards have not yet emerged. Due to this, the expected background and level of knowledge is more varied: ”At this point everyone is needed” (Regular participant 2). Another explanation for the diversity of participants can be the several ideological, business and technological possibilities related to Ethereum, as discussed in subsections 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 regarding the context of the case.

Another central difference was related to the agenda of the meetings. In the Ethereum Helsinki meetups no specific agenda was usually announced or agreed upon prior to the meeting but the agenda emerged as the meeting went on. The interviewees explained that having a specific agenda was not necessary for them due to the narrowly defined topic. “Ethereum” was considered to signal enough about the content of the meetup: “It is the topic, Ethereum” (Senior participant 1). In the case of more developed technologies, the agenda became more important for the participants to understand the specific position of that meeting: ”There can then be already so many different things under that topic [Javascript]” (Newcomer 3). The Ethereum Helsinki meetup seemed also a more fluid arena in terms of what kind of topics were discussed there: “In that meetup there is no set goal but the field is completely open, one can talk about almost anything“ (Newcomer 3).

Due to the uniqueness of the group within its field (in Finland) and the nascent state of the technological development of Ethereum, the meetup was also referred to as a pioneer group or a group of pioneers: ”This is definitely like a pioneer group” (Newcomer 3). It is interesting to note that while defining the meetup as “pioneering” the individual defines simultaneously himself or herself as a pioneer. Thus, not only is the meetups’s position in the wider network negotiated and recreated but also the position of the individuals in their respective fields.

Another context that seemed to define the meaning and purpose of the Ethereum Helsinki Meetup was so-called ‘blockchain hype’. The Cambridge English Dictionary defines ‘hype’ as “a situation in which something is advertised and discussed in newspapers, on television, etc. a lot in order to attract everyone's interest”. In this case the discussion took place in a wider variety of forums such as Reddit, Twitter and a variety of blogs and online news sites (e.g., Coindesk). In addition, several global consulting companies and financial institutions such as McKinsey & Company (What next for blockchain?, 2017) and Goldman Sachs (The new technology of trust, n.d.) have published studies or reports on blockchain. The staggering number of different blockchain related meetups and the global spread of them is also one indicator of the hype.

For the interviewees the hype was important in defining the meaning of the meetup group. Many described that they had joined the group to seek balance to the hype: “Because if you only scroll materials online… It’s extremely hard to grasp what is the actual state of development now… and what is relevant and attractive” (Newcomer 3). Information about the technology and experiments were perceived to be available online in abundance but recognizing false or relevant information from the flow of news was difficult. The group was seen as a source of concreteness in contrast to the wider hype around blockchain technologies and Ethereum:

> But in that meetup it is more like one can see the concreteness. Like okay, no matter how much there would be hype it will still take a long time before those are [working]. (Senior participant, 2).

As such, the role of the meetings in the wider context was considered as a source of information as well as a space to exchange ideas and experiences about the technology:

> If for example in the medieval ages the scientists gathered together to discuss those themes then this is kind of a modern equivalent for that. But instead of science we have a special kind of technology that kind of gathers ideas together

> and then the discussions revolve around how the technology could be used and how it can change the society. (Regular participant 1).

Additionally, the meetup was regarded to be typical in its form for a novel technology: “This kind of meetup group is clearly like ah… first-level social group that is born around new technology” (Newcomer 3). Additionally, three out of eight interviewees predicted the group would not necessarily exist in its current form in few years but most likely transform into something else or fade away: ”Most likely this kind of short-term information channel. Short term meaning few years” (Organizer & Founder). Consequently, the meetup could be understood as a temporally limited space in the sense that it exists ‘for now’ before it is either transformed into something else, goes extinct or another organization replaces it.

While the exchange of information and experiences was the main activity of meetings, they also spread to other arenas. Participants shared information and experiences they learned in the meetings with their own networks and main arenas in their respective fields: “And then I’ve been talking about these things also in the bitcoin meetups” (Senior participant 2), “I listen and try to translate what this could mean for business” (Newcomer 2). Thus, practices such as ideas, strategies or ways of doing (Strang & Soule, 1998) were carried to other fields by the participants.

The exchange took place also the other way round, from outside to the meetings. Indeed, the very idea for setting up the Ethereum Helsinki meetup came from one of the founders visiting bitcoin meetups. Additionally, the routine for doing presentations on a PowerPoint in the meetings can also be seen as an practice brought from the business world, and the style of critiquing the presentations afterwards reminds practices of academia: “And I try to ask good questions… in an academic style” (Organizer & Founder). The organizers also actively sought best practices to omit from other Ethereum Meetups in Europe, acting as brokers (Krinsky & Crossley, 2014) mediating information from one source to another:

> So especially in the beginning we contacted people. I went few times to Berlin to talk to the local group there and… Well, we have also been following London [Meetup] a bit but when we got this off the ground here… Then we don't have to look abroad for a model because we know how to do things on our own as well. (Organizer & Founder).

The group's independence was also important to the organizers: they wanted to do things their way rather than copying another group abroad. This implies that one of the motivations for organizing can be organizing for alternative: producing the wanted organizational form through action.

4.2.5 Linking the organizational, network and institutional perspective

Ultimately, the three perspectives presented in the previous subsections are linked to each other. So far this section has focused on the structural and spatial side of the meetups in the light of Haug's (2013) framework. The previous sections have mapped the characteristics of the case as a 'meeting arena' and described how it is organized. Additionally, the subsection 4.2.2 has located the meetups in a wider context discussed the relationships to other groups in the field.

The findings suggest that the meetup is a combination of a partial organization, a network hub and an institution. Organizational decisions, inter-personal trust and taken-for-granted beliefs and norms all affect to the construction of the meeting as an event (i.e. a single meetup) but each element structures it in a different way. In the case, network was especially crucial for recruiting new participants and spreading the word about the meetings. Most participants were invited directly by a friend and knew other participants before attending the meetings for the first time. The hub effect of the meeting was also visible: the meetings were a place to meet, to learn about each other and about the topic as well as to socialize. Participants were mobilized through their individual goals such as learning what the other participants are working on and finding overlapping interests.

On the other hand, shared norms, values and routines seemed to have an affect on the way the meeting was organized (and what was left unorganized). There seemed to be a latent agreement concerning appropriate behavior in the meetings, thus, many aspects of the meeting were not decided and were left to 'resolve' themselves during the meetings. Such aspects included keeping the agenda open, little or no governing the speech, no rules or sanctions concerning participants' behavior as well as voluntary sign up to the group and its meetings through the meetup.com.

Finally, organizational elements provided some 'ground rules' for establishing the meetings. It was decided that the group should welcome all participants regardless of their background or level of technical affinity, or other attributes. The timing of the meetings was set to repeat on a specific day monthly, and organizers were named and given the authority as well as the responsibility to admin the group's page and announce the locations of the meetings. Additionally, choosing to establish the group on the meetup.com site added an element of transparency making monitoring possible also outside meetings.

However, the dynamics between the different logics are not static. A network can be transformed into a partial organization by adding for example a decision about who can join the network (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011). Organizational decisions can become taken-for-granted, or the organization itself can become institutionalized (Haug, 2013). So, over time the emphasis on the different logics can vary.

As every meeting is partly emerging and actors actively construct the space through their interaction (Haug, 2013), it is possible that the dynamics between these three logics vary from meeting to meeting. For example, if the meeting participants would consist of only senior participants, the meeting's organization would likely rely more heavily on network and institution. These participants would not only know and trust each other but having attended already several meetings these people would have also learned and internalized the norms and routines of the meetings. On the contrary, if the meeting would include mostly newcomers, some rules would perhaps be needed, or implicit norms would have to be outspoken and decided upon, thus relying more on organizational elements. Additionally, the size of each meeting is likely to have an affect on the structuring and settings of the meeting. The dynamics can be different if there are 30 versus 10 participants. A meeting of 30 people is likely to need more structuring and guidance, and thus be more formal than a meeting of 10 as for example giving turns in speaking becomes more complicated and important in bigger meetings.

Based on some of the informant's stories, the meeting space has slightly changed during its first year. Senior participant 2 described how the very first meetings were mainly chats among a circle of friends or at least acquaintances, and participants usually knew all other participants either directly or through another friend. Taking into account that the meetings were also first promoted within the organizers' personal networks, the meeting group had a strong emphasis on network form of organizing in the beginning.

However, over time, Senior 2 described that the meetings have become more 'organized'. The founder and organizer described how the participant group has become more diverse with about half of the participants being newcomers whereas before everyone knew each other. This most likely resulted in the need to start doing introductions. Moreover, after the first months the group started to organize visits to companies, which transformed the nature of the meeting from a 'separated' space reserved only to the group to having a meeting within another organization. This resulted in emphasizing registration through the website prior to the meetings. Thus, organizational elements became more prominent.

The Ethereum Helsinki Meetup, can be regarded as a meeting space that includes a series of meetings or one meeting, depending on the emphasis. Seeing the space as a series of meetings highlights the institutional side of the space and accumulation of cultural knowledge as well as affirmation of practices over time as they become taken for granted elements of the space. Seeing the space from the perspective of a single meeting highlights the unique experiences of each participant, and the here-and-now socially constructed side of the meeting. However, practically, the meeting space has both of these elements: on the one hand there are decided ground rules, taken for granted practices (“this is how we do things”), and existing personal relationships between the participants, and on the other hand the diverse changing group of individuals who shape the space as they interact within it.

The next section will expand the discussion of the findings further and examine the results against a broader body of literature.

4.3 Discussion

After analyzing and discussing the organizational features of the movement meetings, a key question is: What does this mean for the theory and research on social movements and organizing?

For one, the case is an example of a pluralistic organization characterized by at least three different logics. It is possible that there are even more institutionalized logics that affect the settings of the meetings. This would be likely if we would focus on individual actors as carriers of their field-specific logics. As such, this kind of approach would limit the investigation on an individual level and be out of the scope of this study. The aim of this study was to discover fundamental logics governing organizing and to test a conceptual model of pluralistic organizing in social movements.

However, what can be said based on the three logics identified is that the case is in its pluralism also an example of an increasingly recognized feature of modern organization (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Besharow & Smith, 2014). In line with Hardy’s (1991) findings, the pluralistic space served as an arena for highly diverse actors whose goals may have conflicted but collaboration and consensus was nevertheless possible. Moreover, this was in line with Haug’s (2013) theorizing about utilizing and encouraging diversity as a resource rather than seeking unity.

Furthermore, the focus on diversity also challenges the deeply rooted notions about social movement spaces as isolated settings (Polletta, 1999). As suggested by Kellogg

(2008), the approach of inclusion, rather than exclusion of actors into the meeting space can be more effective in promoting change. Also in this study, the diverse input of participants was seen as fruitful and intentional. It was described that since the topic was a nascent technology, high diversity of participants was needed, which is in line of Jay's (2012) finding that highly pluralistic organizations can be more innovative. Furthermore, Furnari (2014) theorized that inter-field settings provide a space for practice generation and diffusion, which can explain the meetup group's contribution to institutional change in a wider perspective.

The findings also emphasize the importance of meetings and face-to-face communication. It seems that social interaction and meetings are as important as ever regardless of the advancements in information technology that would have allowed the meetups to be organized virtually. Instead, online communication had only an instrumental role in relation to the meetings: the main function of online communication was to facilitate the organizing of the meetups.

The case can also be seen as an example of unconventional organizing (Brés et al. 2017). It is an example of an organization that is not a 'complete' organization in the sense of formal organizations (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011) but a partial organization with some elements of a complete organization.

The concept of partial organization touches important aspects of both organizational and movement research. As discussed in section 2.1, movements and organizations have been regarded having increasingly similar characteristics (Davis et al., 2008) and researchers have started to refer to social movements as a specific type of organization (SMO) (Soule, 2012B; Davis et al., 2005). The concept of partial organization allows for a more nuanced and specific view of what constitutes an organization and gives credit for those collective forms that could otherwise be characterized as non-organizations or informal organizations. By focusing on decisions as the main foundation of organization Ahrne and Brunsson (2011) imply that organization is always a conscious effort, which distinguishes it from other forms such as a network.

For movements research the concept of partial organization matters in the sense that it eliminates the discussion about whether or not movements should be considered as organizations. It also allows investigating partial organization as a conscious choice rather than failed attempt to form a 'complete' organization.

To extend the discussion further, it is interesting to ask not just how the space is organized but also why the structure has certain elements. Based on reviewed literature and the case data, at least three different explanations can be given: ideological, institutional and practical.

Firstly, especially anarchist movements are known for omitting a certain organizational form presenting their wider ideologies about how the society should be organized (Coleman, 2013; Land & King, 2014; Western, 2014). Combined with the ideologies revolving around blockchain as the technology enabling a society wide change in governmental and financial processes towards decentralization and distributed power, and even Liberalism (Hucke & White, 2016), the case can also be viewed from the perspective of organizing for alternative (Land & King, 2014; Parker et al., 2014). Thus, relatively low hierarchy and openness of participation can be regarded as following some of anarchist ideals (Coleman, 2013; Western, 2014).

However, adopting such cultural practices can also be understood as adopting prevailing institutionalized norms from the environment (Thornton & Occasio, 1999). So, secondly, wider field level logics can serve as a template providing the guidelines for action, interaction and interpretation (Thornton & Occasio, 1999). Meetings have also been conceptualized as organizational communication genres that are based on norms shared in the community providing the manuscript for social interaction that takes place within meetings (Köhler et al., 2012; Orlikowski & Yates, 1994) guiding the notion of what a meeting is expected to be like. Taking into account that many of the participants, including the organizers, were relatively experienced meetup-visitors, it is possible that the form of the meetup originates from the field rather than from the organizers' or participants' ideals. Thus, the form of a 'meetup' can be institutionalized to include low hierarchies, free participation and open discussion. The institutional perspective can explain why a certain organizational form can be regarded by participants as more ‘natural’ than some other: what is taken for granted does not have to be decided upon (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011).

Thirdly, reasons for a partial organization can be rather pragmatic than aiming at actualizing a certain ideology. Some elements of organization can be excluded simply because they would require resources that the organizers do not have (Haug, 2013), such as financial resources, space or time. For example, as the case organization did not have any formal funding nor was involved in collecting money in any form such as membership fees, and thus the options for physical meeting spaces were limited. Consequently, the number of participants and type of meetings were limited in terms of, for example, equipment available for presenting.

Based on the case data, all of the reasons are possible, and can have affected the organizing to various degrees, affecting both which organizational elements were regarded possible, which were decided and which were not decided. So, in addition to viewing the space as a combination of a network, an institution and a partial organization, the multiplicity of logics reflects to the possible causes and motivations for a certain type of organizational form.

The plurality of goals is also descriptive of modern social movements and organizations (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Besharow & Smith, 2014). Whereas much of traditional research on the effects of social movements has focused on policy changes either within organizations (Briscoe & Gupta, 2016) or in government regulation (Giugni, 1999), a pluralistic view problematizes the notion of a shared goal. This represents a view that has been linked to ‘new social movements’ that emphasize the action of individuals rather than the actions of a group as a collective (Pichardo, 1997).

Haug (2013) suggests that organization itself can be a goal and measure for success. By looking at the membership data (Appendix III), it can be concluded that the Ethereum

Helsinki Meetup is successful the since it has organized 16 monthly meetups consecutively. From this point of view, the success of the meetings depends on whether they take place. However, evaluating the success of the meetings further would require evaluating and comparing the personal goals and experiences of the participants.

This relates to a more fundamental discussion about social movement organizing. Traditionally, social movement literature has focused on resource mobilization (King & Pearce, 2010; McAdam et al., 1996; McCarthy & Zald, 1977; Weber & King, 2005) and has seen mobilizing supporters for action as one of its key goals and success criteria (Briscoe & Gupta, 2016; Giugni, 1998: McAdam & Paulsen, 1993). Moreover, the purpose of organizing meetings has also been linked to organizing people for collective action (Haug, 2013) and free spaces have been sites for mobilizing actors and claims (Polletta, 1999; Kellogg, 2008). Thus, the perspective has focused on social movements as groups for uniting individuals to take certain action or adopt a certain belief or idea. However, this is not what was found in this case.

There was no specific ideology or goal that all the participants, or even most of them, would have shared and actively acted upon. Instead, the existence and organization of the space itself seemed to form the overarching purpose. From this perspective, the change sought was the establishment of the space and the creation of something that did not exist. In contrast to prefigurative politics that focus on the everyday lived lives of activists (Reedy et al., 2016; Véron, 2016), however, this meeting space was temporally limited to one event per month, although reoccurring.

Returning to the definition formulated in the end of the literature review, the following definition concludes individually motivated, organizing focused social movements as: individuals or groups of individuals that engage to organize a collective space for interaction and problem solving. In this case the problem to be solved is not necessarily a specific perceived social order or injustice that actors want to alter. What drew the participants together was a shared interest in the technology and clusters of shared problems: seeking more technical knowledge, seeking contacts, and seeking information about the current state of development. Participants shared enthusiasm towards the technology and belief in its transformative power. However, the type of change they would see probable, possible or preferable was up to their personal views rather than the view of the group. In this sense, the meetings were also not purely social movement meetings in the sense that not all participants were interesting in bringing about a wider change. However, they were sites for multiple goals, perspectives and logics facilitating collective action through providing a space to interact.

The next and final chapter will summarize and discuss this study's implications for theory and society as well as suggest possible avenues for future research.

5 CONCLUSION

This chapter provides a conclusion including a summary of the study and main findings (5.1), theoretical and societal implications (5.2) along with the study's limitations (5.3), and finally, suggestions for future research (5.4).

5.1 Summary of the study and main findings

The purpose of this study was to describe social movement meeting organizing and increase understanding of partially organized spaces for collective action. The research was carried out as a descriptive case study of a particular meeting organization, Ethereum Helsinki Meetup, focused on the nascent blockchain technology with ideological underpinnings and a possibly revolutionary impact on the society. The primary data of the case consisted of interviews conducted with participants of the meetup. In addition, membership data and information available through the group's online site on meetup.com were utilized to complement the case.

The case was analyzed utilizing both data-driven coding and theory based coding deploying Haug's (2013) triangular framework of a meeting arena for the latter. The results of the analysis indicate that the meetups as a setting are a combination of both emergent and decided elements. The meetings can be described as a hybrid of a partial organization, a network hub and an institution. In practice, the three perspectives are linked to each other and together complement each other to form one entity. However, this study shows that they can be regarded as analytically separate to arrive at a more pronounced multilevel analysis of meeting as an organized space.

In addition, the study found the case to be an example of a pioneer in its own field: it was the first and only meetup devoted to Ethereum in Finland at the time of the study. This possibly had an affect on the settings and organization of the meetup as very open and in the same time diverse in regards the backgrounds and goals of the participants.

The findings provide support for analyzing meeting spaces through a triangular hybrid structure presented by Haug (2013). Furthermore, the study provides an empirical example of the theory on partial organization by Ahrne and Brunsson (2011). However, in contrast to the traditional views of social movement spaces as isolated (e.g., Polletta, 1999; Tétreault, 1993) this case found openness and exclusion to be defining elements of the space and thus supporting Kellogg's (2008) results of inclusive spaces as more successful in achieving institutional change than exclusive spaces. The next sections open up the theoretical and societal implications of these findings.

5.2 Implications

This study has six main implications for the existing body of research. Implications to organizations and organizing are discussed first, after which implications to the study of social movements are mapped.

Firstly, this study explores empirically the concept of a partial organization (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011) and conceptualizes an organized space located between fields and outside formal organizations. The results of the study imply that by looking at the environment of formal organizations as organized to varied degrees can help to understand the different collectives and actors operating outside formal organizations.

Secondly, the case is an example of pluralism in organizing. It illustrates the coexistence of multiple organizing logics in one organized setting, and describes how each approach structures the event in a different way while simultaneously being reconstructed by actors interacting in the space. This brings forward a relatively recent research stream on understanding pluralism and its effects on organizing the function of organizations (Brès et al, 2017, Besharow & Smith, 2014). Both the concept of partial organization and multiplicity of organizing logics bring forward understanding of modern fluid organizations that do not seem to fit to the traditional descriptions of bureaucratic-rational organizing.

In terms of social movement studies, this piece of research increases understanding of organizing in movements in several ways. This study provides an empirical validation for Haug's (2013) triangular model concerning movement meeting organizing. The third main implication to theory is that instead of categorizing collectives into organizations and non-organizations based on the level of their formality, researchers could learn more about movements by expanding the perspective to include network and institutional features as supporting rather than excluding each other.

Additionally, the case brings forward a stream of studies focusing on social movement spaces and their organization. Although a vibrant research stream, it has mainly focused on spaces as isolated, protected 'safe havens' (Tétreault, 1993). This study challenges that notion by presenting a space that thrives on diversity rather than isolation or unity of participants. Moreover, the findings suggest that organizing meeting space can be an end in itself.

As the fifth main implication, this case makes the first contribution to a new research direction suggested by Haug (2013) by separating mobilizing and organizing into two analytically distinct processes. This brings focus to the act of organizing as a goal and central activity within movements. By focusing on the organization of a space as a goal in itself, we can possibly understand better modern movements that are not necessarily mobilized by a certain cause or making demands to states or organizations, such as the Occupy movement in 2011.

Finally, the study contributes to the integration of the two domains of social movement studies and organization research. Although meetings are a frequent element of organizational life, they have been studied relatively little compared to their pervasiveness of modern organizational practices. This study borrows the concept of meetings from organizational research and suggests that social movement meetings can be planned and organized events that serve many central functions for the participants such as information sharing, learning as well as asking and receiving help. Social movement researchers have focused their attention to the level of movements or individual actors, neglecting meetings as a possibly fruitful category for analysis. However, the findings of this study suggest that meetings and their settings can provide fruitful insights to the organization of a movement and challenges our conceptualization of what constitutes a movement organization.

In addition to theoretical implications, this study provides a societal implication. The research hopes to increase the understanding of how different actors within society are organized to a various degree. By describing organizing that takes place in-between and outside formal organizations and large institutions, this study draws attention to innovation emerging in the outskirts of formal actors. The setting of the group also highlights the importance of public, free or affordable meeting places for innovation and civil action.

Before recommending avenues for future research, the next section discusses the limitations of this study.

5.3 Limitations

This study has temporal, methodological and theoretical limitations. Firstly, the case focuses on a certain period of time, the group's first year of existence. The data is based on the experiences of the interviewees and the meetings they have attended and might not describe the experiences of every participant. Moreover, the case describes the organization of a particular group and their meetings rather than all meetups.

Secondly, researcher influences the research process. The research design, data collection and most importantly analysis of data carry subjective interpretation and are limited by the experiences of the researcher. To make this limitation less impairing, the role and choices as a researcher have been reflected in Chapter 3 making underlying assumptions explicit.

Thirdly, to maintain the focus of this study, some research streams were excluded. Numerous researchers have already contributed to the study of culture in movements focusing on the socially constructed side (e.g., Della Porta & Fabbri, 2016) such as framing (Benford & Snow, 2000) and collective identity creation (Polletta & Jasper, 2001). Thus, this study excluded the in-depth discussion on the cultural processes that may take place within the meeting arena. Furthermore, the possible consequences of organizing a meeting space are not directly theorized to maintain focus in the organizing. For example Furnari (2014) and Strand and Soule (1998) offer a thorough investigation on the practice diffusion in meetings and movements. In addition, this study does not consider specifically the effect of national culture into organizational norms or practices.

Finally, the novelty of this study's topic poses some limitations. As the existing research on movement meetings is scarce and practically non-existent in terms of partial organization, this study relies more heavily on few fundamental articles that are one of the very first ones representing a new research stream such as Haug (2013) and Ahrne and Brusson (2011). Furthermore, the distinction between mobilizing and organizing has not yet been studied empirically. In addition, blockchain technologies and Ethereum are emerging topics around which scientific research and peer-reviewed material is limited albeit growing.

The next and final section of this paper suggests possible areas for future research, some of which can serve to fill in the gaps left by this study.

5.4 Suggestions for future research

This section suggests five possible areas for future research. Firstly, this study concludes that meetings provide a fruitful category that deserves more attention from both organization and social movement scholars. However, this study was limited to one case and one context, serving rather as a springboard than an exhaustive description or explanation of social movement meetings. Going forward, the theory could be improved by conducting a multilevel case study of several meeting arenas and comparing how the three different logics present themselves across the arenas, and what purpose each logic serves. Another possibility would be to examine how the three logics are contested in meetings and how the partly contradictory logics can converge. Additionally, as this study did not account for the effect of (national) culture, it would be interesting to study how the national, rather than just field level logics affect the organizational forms that actors prefer and adopt.

Secondly, the Haug's (2013) triangular framework could be utilized to explore meetings in formal organizations. Does the network and institution logic present themselves differently in settings that are regarded more formal? Could a triangular approach be fruitful for understanding, for instance, modern and fluid work communities that can be closer to a group of experts than a unified actor? This approach could be especially interesting in the context of project work to understand the cooperation of experts from various fields interacting in a temporal organization.

Thirdly, we could understand better how the relations between multiple logics in organizations change. For example, how does a network transform into an organization, or into an institution? Can it happen other way around? Are there organizations that were 'born' as movements but developed into something else? Or organizations that developed into movements?

Fourthly, the focus on meetings and organizing opens up a discussion about membership and participation in movements. For example, how to understand movements where membership and participation is extremely fluid and actors see themselves rather units than a collective actor and might visit just one meeting here and then but not follow all of them? Are they still movement members? How is trust between actors established in this type of setting?

Finally, this case has discussed meetings and meetups as mostly similar categories. However, given the exponential growth of meetups and their prominence in especially the sector of nascent technologies, it would be interesting to take meetups as their own communication category and study if meetups form a specific type of communication and organizing that would deserve its own definition.

To conclude, understanding of social movements spaces, meeting and organizing could be increased by placing attention to organizational logics that comprise a meeting and the interplay of meeting logics and their change over time. Furthermore, a pluralistic approach could tell us something new about meetings in formal organizations. Lastly, a consideration of organizing and mobilizing as separate processes could benefit the discussion on modern movement organizing and fluid participation.

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7 APPENDICES

Appendix I: Interview guide.

Information about the study

I am writing my Master's Thesis at Aalto University School of Business concerning social groups and movements in the context of novel technologies. The subject of my study is the Ethereum Helsinki meetup group, which is why you have been asked to participate in this study. The supervisor of this research is professor Liisa Välikangas.

The duration of the interview is around 45 minutes. This interview is recorded, and will be transcribed into a text file after the interview. Participation in this interview is voluntary and you may interrupt the interview at any time or refuse to answer any question if you wish to do so.

This interview and the data collected during the process are confidential. Interviewees will only be mentioned in the report by using a pseudonym and references to other people, places and organizations will be removed or altered so that direct identification of interviewees is not possible.

This data will be used only for the purposes of this research and will be demolished after the research has been published. If you wish, you may obtain the results of this study after it has been completed.

All the questions in this interview concern your experiences in the Ethereum meetup group unless otherwise indicated.

Background questions

Participation in Ethereum Helsinki Meetups:	
Place of residence:	
Occupation/Title:	
Is your current work related to blockchain or Ethereum? If yes, how?	
Age:	

THEMES

Definition & meaning (Benford & Snow, 2000)
- Could you describe with your own words, what is Ethereum Meetup Helsinki?
- What are these meetups like? What happens there?
- What do you think is the purpose of this group?
- Role of the group in the bigger picture?

Goals (Polletta & Jasper, 2001; Kühl, 2013)
- How did you became interested in this group and the meetings?
- Why are you interested in these meetings? / What do you seek in these meetings?

Participation & membership (Jasper, 2011; Kühl, 2013)
- Joining & first meeting?
- Describe your participation in the meetings?
- If you have participated only some of the meetings, how do you decide which one you attend?

Impacts (Giugni, 1998; Strang & Soule, 1998; King & Pearce, 2010; Rao et al., 2000)
- How has participating in the meetings affected your work/ thinking/life?

Identity (Polletta & Jasper, 2001)
- The purpose of this group to you?

Network (Haug, 2013; Krinsky & Crossley, 2014)
- Relationship to other members?
- How did you hear about this group?
- Do you go to other similar meetups and your role in them?
- What is the function of these groups to you? How do you position them in relation to the Ethereum Helsinki group?

<u>Additional questions for founder(s)</u>

Organization (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011; Haug, 2013)
- How and why was the group founded?
- How did the structure and form of the group come to be? (e.g., name, platform, timing…)
- Who coordinate(s) the group? How? How are the meetings organized?
- Financing?

Network (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Haug, 2013)
- “Idols”?
- Relationship to other Ethereum Meetup groups?
- Connections to other organizations?

Goals (Kühl, 2013; Rao et. al., 2000)
- Initial goals?
- New/altered goals?
- Purpose of the meetings?
- Future of the group?

Tactics (Briscoe & Gupta, 2016; Rao et al., 2000)
- How do you try to ensure the group meets its goal?
- Communications? Marketing?

Appendix II: Coding schema.

T = Theory-based code

I = Initial code based on data-driven coding

ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENTS			
Code	**Description**	**Sub-codes**	**Example**
Membership (T)	Decision concerning inclusion/exclusion of participants	Open participation	"Everyone has the right to come and one doesn't even have to have a keen interest in the topic" - Senior participant 1
		Company cooperation	"Both sides [business and technical] are needed, it's a bit like Ying and Ying" - Founder & Organizer
Hierarchy (T)	Decision concerning formal power or procedure to make a decision	Setting up	"We give time and place " - Organizer & Founder
		Calling out presenters	"He [the organizer] has asked few friends if they would like to come and present" - Senior participant 3
		Challenging authority	"It's a group organized by a diverse group of people" - Senior participant 2
Rules (T)	Describing explicit rule concerning behavior or other aspects of the group	Meeting place	See the 3rd example above.
		Meeting time/schedule	"We have set up a specific date… every second Wednesday of the month" - Organizer & Founder
Monitoring (T)	Decision concerning the possibility and right to monitor the meeting and its participants		"There is an open site where everyone can see who is going and then also open discussion about what was discussed and after that the feedback is also visible to all" - Senior participant 2
Sanctions (T)	Decision concerning positive or negative consequences based on behavior	Not found	– –
NETWORK			
Code	**Description**	**Sub-codes**	**Example**
Joining (I&T)	How did participant hear/find out about the meetings?	Personal invitation	"A friend told me I should check it out" - Senior participant 1
		Social media	"In LinkedIn somebody linked that" - Newcomer 3
		Meetup.com	"I was scrolling suitable meetups on meetup.com" - Newcomer 1

Existing relationship to members (I&T)	Did the participant know other members before their 1st meetup?	Yes/no	"I knew some people there so of course it was easier to go in that sense" - Regular participant 2
Recruiting (I&T)	Efforts to attract new members	Personal networks	"I have asked few people to come there" - Senior participant 2
		Advertisement	"If we have some really good presentation coming up… then we might advertise a bit on Facebook" - Organizer & Founder
Diversity as a resource (I)	Description of diversity as a resource		"It's really more of a richness that there are people from every field" - Senior participant 2
Inter-actor ties (I&T)	The nature and quality of personal ties between actors	Tight	"Very tight-knight" - Regular participant 2
		Professional	"It's more of pragmatic relationship" Newcomer 3
Meeting place (I)	Descriptions of the purpose and function of the setting	Meeting place	"So that you can just go and freely go talk to people. That's important" - Senior participant 1
		Community	"A local community organization" - Regular participant 1
		Network aimed organizational goals	"So that people would get to know what everyone is working on in this area, and who is who. Creating connections between people" - Organizer & Founder
		Topic secondary	"The people there are the thing" - Regular participant 2
Face-to-face encounter (I)	Description of the meaning and values of meeting face-to-face (in comparison to online meetings)	Necessary	"That's the only way to like really deepen understanding" - Newcomer 3
		Natural	"So even though all this is so abstract, networking takes places in social interaction, face-to-face" - Regular participant 2
Trust building (T)	Practices and activities aiming to build and show interpersonal trust	Confidentiality	It's somehow easier to say face-to-face something confidential because there will be no record left" - Regular participant
		Open/gratuitous sharing	"The discussion there is extremely open. Across organizational boundaries, even competitors" - Newcomer 2

		Reciprocity	"So that you can freely help and also take advantage of that help. It's reciprocal like that" - Senior participant 2
		Proximity	"I find that small groups are good for receiving and giving help as everyone's skills and expertise are known so you know who to ask" - Regular participant 2
Sense making & learning (I&T)	Description of learning, understanding and making sense in and with the help of the meetups	Activity	"I listen so I understand" - Newcomer 2
		Motivation to participate	"I wanted to learn more about the legal side" - Newcomer 1
		Consequence	"Through attending I understood that I need to learn more" - Newcomer 2
Affinity group formation (T)	Has the participant thought about setting up a separate meeting group?	Yes/no	"We have been thinking with few friends if we should do a meetup around this" - Newcomer 1
INSTITUTION			
Code	**Description**	**Sub-codes**	**Example**
Routines (T)	Repetitive, taken for granted practices or activities related to organizing	Presenting	"Typically it's like, we have one or two presentations and after that we discuss" - (Organizer & Founder)
		Discussion	
		Participation	"I keep it marked in my calendar" - Senior participant 2
Rituals (T)	Practices or activities with symbolic meaning(s)	Welcoming	"Founder 2 always welcomes new people and that way tries to get them feel part of the community" - Organizer & Founder
Norms (T)	Taken for granted assumptions or valuations concerning the type and form of the meetings	Participation sign up	"You can just come" - Senior participant 1
Meeting style (T)	Undecided features or characteristics of the meeting (that are not activities)	Seating	"Round table style" - Newcomer 2

		Communication about meetings	"It's mainly through the meetup.com site" - Organizer & Founder
		Transparency & Openness	“Everyone tells what they are working on and what they would like to do” - Regular participant 1
		Atmosphere	"Intimate but open and encouraging" - Regular Participant 2
		Egalitarian leadership style	"There was no ringmaster" - Newcomer 1
		Freedom	"You can do whatever you want and you do not have to do anything if you don’t want to" - Senior participant 1
		Structure avoidance	"We try to keep the structure as light as possible" - Organizer & Founder
		Emerging agenda	"You just have to go there" - Newcomer 2
Meetup as a category (I)	Description of a 'meetup' as a specific type of event or activity		“Nowadays around all new ideas can be set up a meetup and then everyone comes there to discuss freely" - Newcomer 3
Evaluation of the meetups (I)	Evaluation of the setting		"Very fruitful settings" - Senior participant 2

RELATIONSHIPS TO OTHER GROUPS

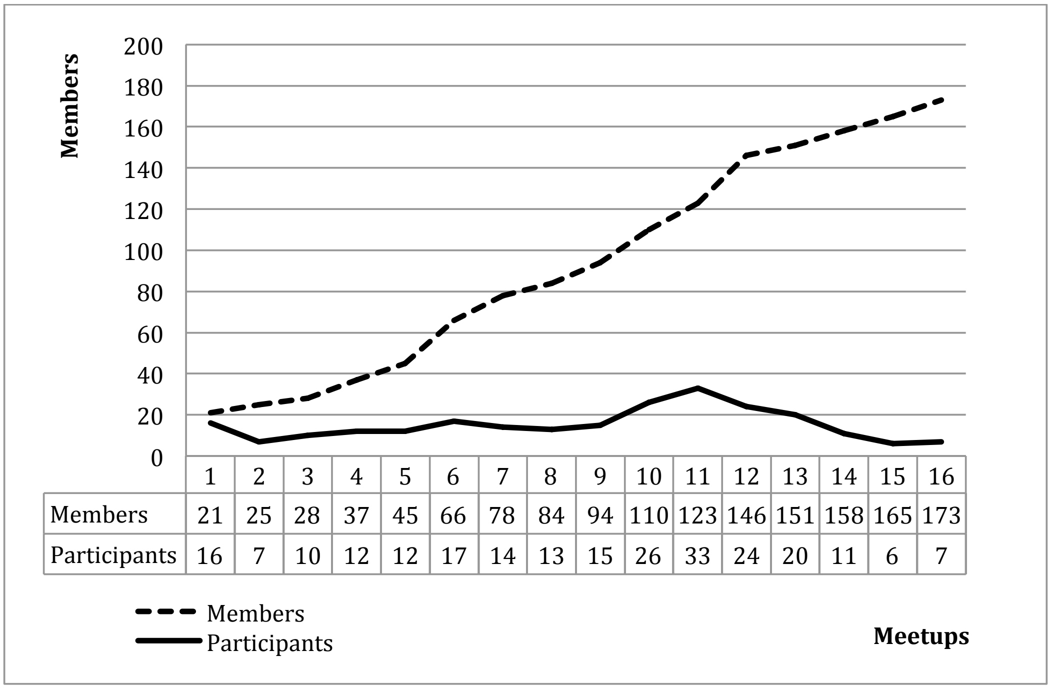
Code	Description	Sub-codes	Example
Bitcoin meetups (I)	References and comparisons to bitcoin themed meetups		"I think Ethereum is more expert forum than the bitcoin meetups" - Senior participant 2
Open source communities (I)	References and comparisons to open source communities		"I could say that open source has been a kind of ideological starting point the way I see it" - Newcomer 3
Other meetups (I)	References and comparisons to other technology meetups	Pioneering	"This group is clearly a pioneering group" - Newcomer 3
Meaning of the group in wider context (I)	Meaning given by participants to the meetup in a wider context	Early stage arena	"This is clearly a first step in the development" - Newcomer 3
		Signal	"This group describes like what is. If it's growing or not" -

Code	Description	Sub-codes	Example
			Newcomer 2
		Collective development through discussion and sharing	"If for example in the medieval ages the scientists gathered together to discuss those themes then this is kind of a modern equivalent for that" Regular participant 2
Brokerage (I)	Flow of practices, ideas and strategies to the meetup and from the meetup to other meetups	Transmitting to other contexts	"I listen and try to translate what this could mean for business" – Newcomer 2
		Bringing from other contexts	"And I try to ask good questions… in an academic style" - Organizer & Founder
CONTEXT / ENVIRONMENT			
Code	**Description**	**Sub-codes**	**Example**
Hype (I)	Description of superfluous media attention around blockchain technologies	Seeking concreteness	"Because if you only scroll materials online… It's extremely hard to grasp what is the actual state of development now… and what is relevant and attractive" - Newcomer 3
		Predicting the development	"When we think how long these kind of technologies are hyped about… It's only a couple of years" - Organizer & Founder
Perception of Ethreum (I)	Participant's perception of Ethereum as a technology	Technical problems / uncertainty	"We see now a lot of bugs typical for the beginning" - Newcomer 3
		Unclear use cases	"It is so novel we don't know we need it yet" - Newcomer 2
		Legal concerns	"The legal side is risky" - Newcomer 1
		Business opportunity	"I follow and think how it could fit to our firm's product portfolio" - Organizer & Founder
		Influential technology	"It's great how everyone is interested in the topic and what is going to happen" - Senior participant 2

PARTICIPATION			
Code	**Description**	**Sub-codes**	**Example**
Participants (I) / Diversity (T)	Description and identification of participant types	Business	"I'm a business person, not IT in any way" - Senior participant 2
		IT	"Nerds like me" - Senior participant 1
		Academic	"Then there's these researchers" - Regular participant 1
		Generally interested	"They are there because the technology might be related to their work and they want to learn a bit more about it" - Regular participant 1
		Idealists	"The history will show whether they will be regarded as lunatics or visionaries" - Regular participant 2
		Specialists / experts	"I have an expert role" - Organizer & Founder
		Core group	"About half is like the core group and about half changes every time" - Organizer & Founder
		Lawyers	"Then we've had lawyers interested in the smart contracts side" - Senior participant 2
		Hobbyists	"Some are interested in just doing something with the technology, like hobby projects" Regular participant 1
Motivation to participate (I)	Participant's reason for attending meetings	Connecting	“I can learn new things, get contacts to people who are interested in the same topics. Also there is the opportunity to cooperate with these people” - Regular visitor 1
		Developing	"I want to participate in the greater technological development if possible" - Senior participant 2
		Learning	"I wanted to understand what is the level of local development" - Newcomer 2
		Doing business	"Seeking expert help and business partners" - Newcomer 3

VISIONS AND GOALS			
Code	**Description**	**Sub-codes**	**Example**
Community identity (I&T)	Describing community identity and shared goals	Community identity creation	"The first time we contact and ask a bit why you are coming" - Organizer & Founder
		Individual goals vs. group goal	"It's more like everyone is working on their own projects instead of the group working on something together" - Regular participant 2
Vision (I)	A preferable future state related to personal goals	Technological vision	"I see that we should get rid off device reliance" Senior participant 2
		Business vision	"That would open up a way to international funding" - Regular participant 2
		Societal vision	"That would increase equality" - Senior participant 2

Appendix III: Member statistics.



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Members	21	25	28	37	45	66	78	84	94	110	123	146	151	158	165	173
Participants	16	7	10	12	12	17	14	13	15	26	33	24	20	11	6	7

Figure 3. Members and meeting participants over time.